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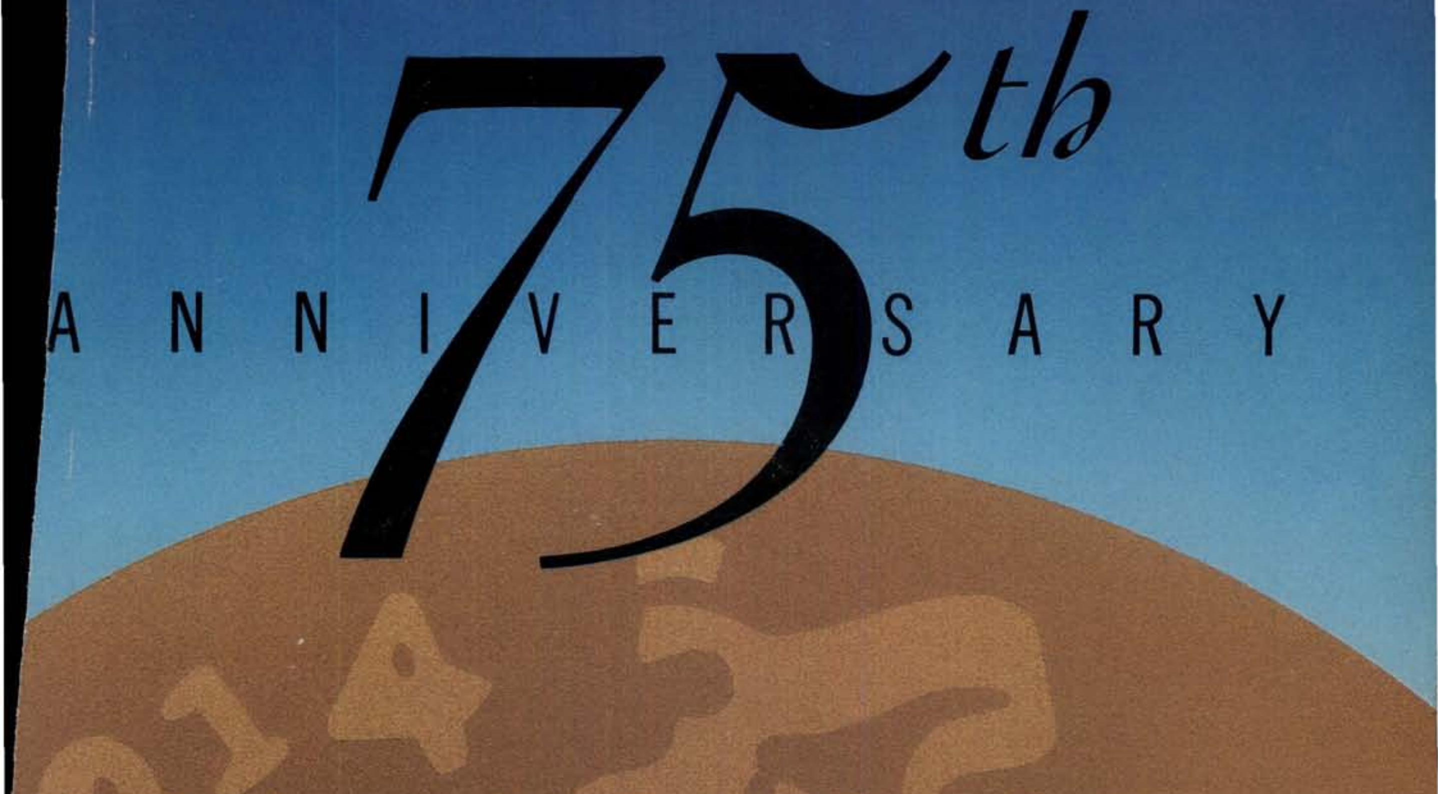

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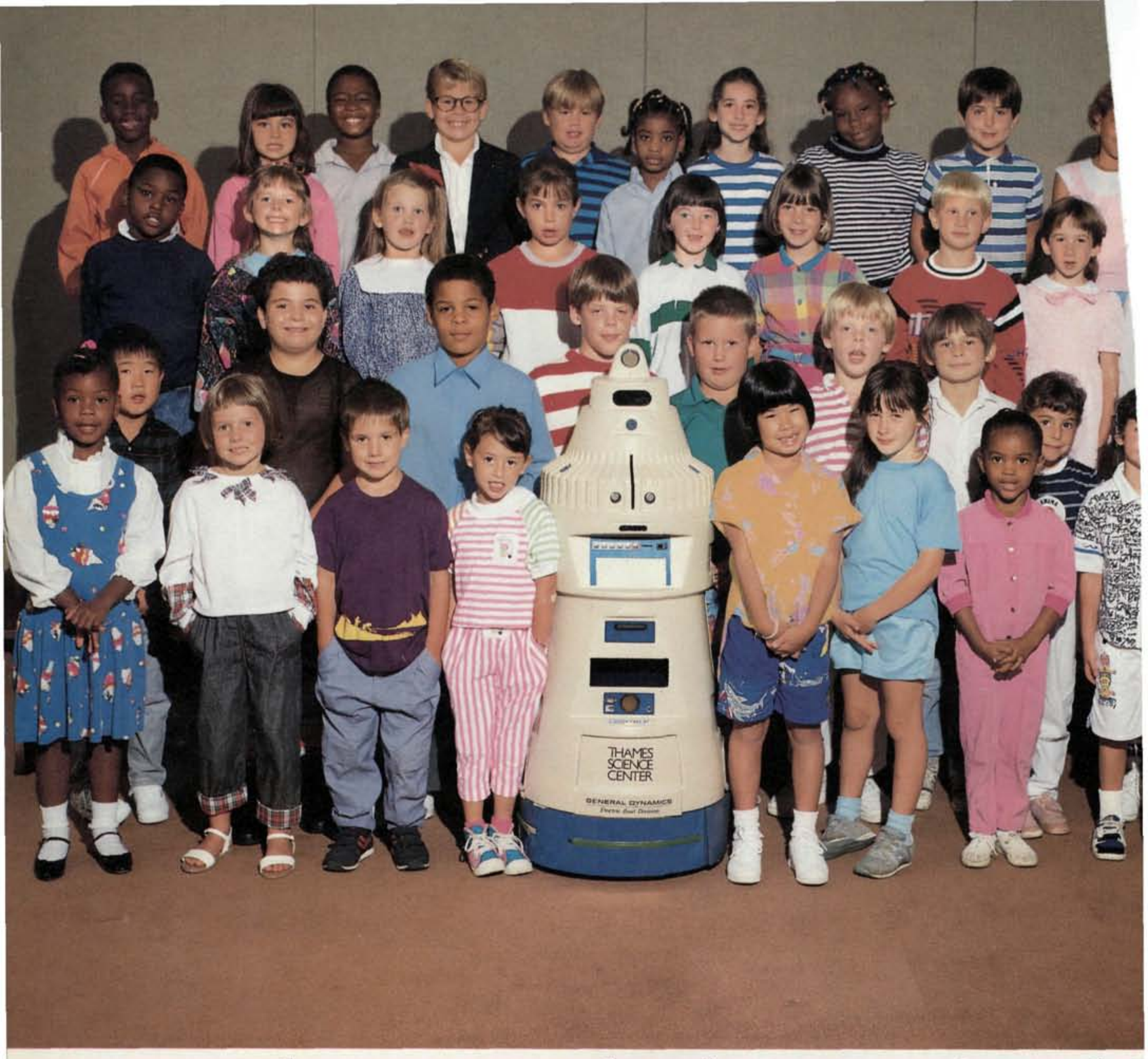

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ISSUE 3,903

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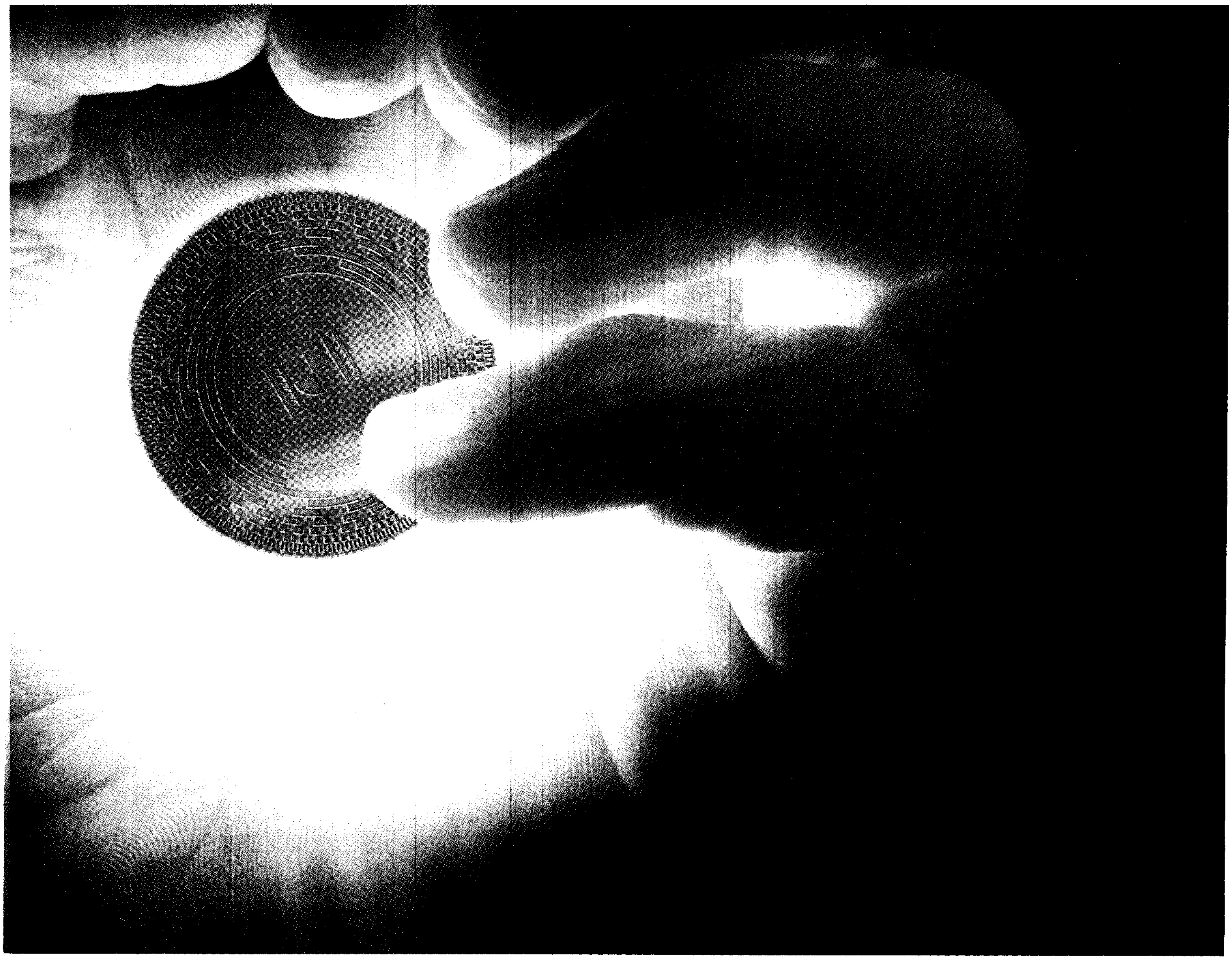

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Colombia's legitimate argument

To the editors:
Tina Rosenberg repeats an all-too-often stated premise: that Colombia's government enjoys little legitimacy ("A Mess in the Andes," September 18 & 25). Typically, the only current evidence given for this assertion is the presence of widespread left-wing guerrilla violence. This persistent view is the reason two successive governments—democratically elected ones—have given the left practically a free hand to continue its terrorism (while the left engages in the charade of peaceful politics through a front organization, the Union Patriótica) in the name of the "poor" during what was supposed to be a peace process. The targets of this violence have included members of anti-guerrilla cooperative movements working legally within Colombian institutions.

Making seats in Congress easier to attain, making mayors electable directly, and opening up campaign time on television (all elements of a political reform package in Colombia) should be sufficient to induce guerrillas to give up their insurgency. Yet by their actions during the peace process, their undisguised allegiance to the Sandinistas and Castro, and their continued holding of territory—some of it also the territory of drug producers—in a manner akin to medieval fiefdoms, the guerrillas have proved that it is their own motivations for power and a pro-Soviet worldview that keeps them going, and not some ill-defined illegitimacy of the Colombian political system.

MATTHEW SHUGART
La Jolla, California

Think again

To the editors:
Louis Menand says that the decade we think of as "the '50s" was actually the years 1954-63, ending abruptly with JFK's assassination ("Don't Think Twice," October 9). Had he continued that line of thought, he would have realized that the '60s ended when Nixon resigned, the '70s ended with the end of the 1981-82 recession, and the '80s will end sometime around George Bush's re-election (I'm a Democrat, but I'm also a pessimist).

Menand fails to make these connections, and so he laments that there are no '90s "waiting to take [the 1980s'] place." Well, of course there aren't—they're not going to start for several years yet. That does not mean they won't be there. The false starts he mentions in 1986, '87, and '88 are actually positive signs that things are changing. By comparison, the end of our "'50s" period could have been predicted by JFK's election; the "'60s" by Nixon's election (actually his re-election); and the "'70s" by high inflation (I bet you thought I was going to say Reagan's election).

So don't worry. The '90s are on the way, and we can all hope that when they actually arrive, they will bring with them more responsible government and responsive leaders. Otherwise, it really will be the morning after in America.

JONATHAN S. GELMAN
New York, New York

To the editors:
Louis Menand misses a chance to point out another salient feature of the '80s when he writes, "Every three years there is another *Rocky*, but it is always the same movie." One characteristic of this decade's popular culture is that dreams (no matter how unrealistic) are always fully realized, provided they are dreamt long enough and hard enough by underdogs who are attractive enough. The first *Rocky* (1976) actually *lost* his title fight, but managed to last through all the rounds. Such an ambivalent ending would outrage today's audience and would surely be changed after the previews.

BRUCE REZNICK
Urbana, Illinois

Jarring inequities

To the editors:
It seems that when politicians want to show how drug-free they are, they submit a urine sample to their choice of labs and get the results in private ("Jar Wars" by William Saletan, October 2). I wonder how they'd feel if they were under the same scrutiny as those in the military.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 201, Number 19, Issue 3,903, November 6, 1989. (Printed in the U.S. on October 18, 1989.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 9 & 16, July 17 & 24, Aug. 7 & 14, and Sept. 18 & 25, 1989) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. Leadership Network advertising (212) 684-5500. Yearly subscriptions, $59.97; foreign, $89.97; Canada, $74.97. Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage & handling). ©1989 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Available on microfilm from University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and Bell & Howell, Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, OH 44691. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Subscribers: Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 56515, Boulder, CO 80322. For subscription problems call 800-274-6686.

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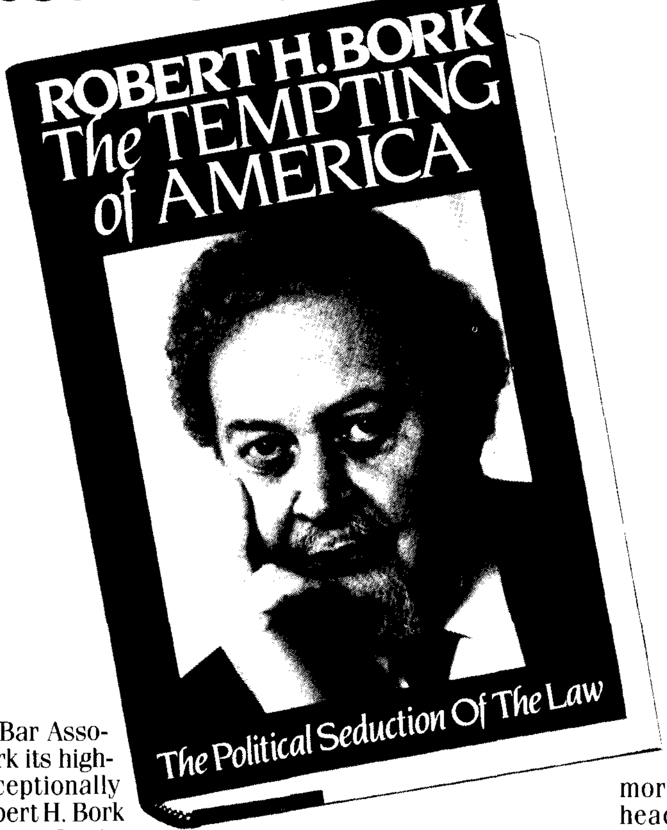

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FROM WASHINGTON

George on my mind

Some agency in Tokyo announced recently, to much gnashing of teeth on this side of the Pacific, that Japan is now richer than the United States. Thanks largely to the explosion in Japanese land prices (which roughly doubled from 1985 to 1988), the total value of that country's assets is now higher than our own.

Adherents of the American economic philosopher Henry George (1839-97) will recognize the fallacy immediately. Rising land prices don't make a nation any richer. How is a society enriched by the fact that the same land now sells for twice as much? This simply represents a transfer of wealth to landowners from those who wish to own land: overwhelmingly, other Japanese. Indeed, although average hourly earnings in Tokyo are now the highest in the world (reports Bill Emmott in his new book, *The Sun Also Sets* [Times Books]), the average New Yorker's earnings go twice as far in buying power. The cost of real estate is a big reason.

Henry George was born 75 years before THE NEW REPUBLIC—my excuse for writing about him this week—in Philadelphia. He dropped out of school at age 13, went to sea shortly thereafter, and wound up working as a printer in San Francisco. In 1879, at age 40, he self-published his brilliant, obtuse, eloquent, grandiloquent masterwork, *Progress and Poverty*. After a slow start it became a best seller and George himself became "the third most famous man in the United States" after Mark Twain and Thomas Edison, according to his granddaughter Agnes George de Mille (yes, *the* Agnes de Mille, the choreographer). He ran a legendary independent race for mayor of New York in 1886, losing to the Democrat but walloping the Republican, Theodore Roosevelt. By the time Roosevelt's great admirer Herbert Croly founded THE NEW REPUBLIC in 1914, however, George and his theories were almost completely forgotten. Since then the lamp has been kept lit, only dimly, by a small group of earnest cranks who tend to repel potential enthusiasts with their extreme zeal.

George himself was a crank, but a wise one. His book addressed the question of *how grinding poverty could exist in the* midst of the great wealth and industrial progress of the late 19th century. A summary cannot do it justice. Nevertheless: George began from the premise that there are three factors of production: labor, capital, and natural resources (primarily land). All the world's wealth is created from these elements, and all the proceeds are divided among the worker, the capitalist, and the landlord. But whereas the return to labor is the reward for effort and the return to capital is the reward for saving, the return to land is the reward for nothing more than monopoly possession of a limited resource. (As real estate investors have noted throughout the ages, "They're not making any more of it.")

The ever rising value of land, George reasoned, is not the result of the owner's efforts but rather a result of the growth of society itself—a larger population with increased wealth. If you own land, "you need do nothing more. You may sit down and smoke your pipe; you may lie around like the lazzaroni of Naples or the leperos of Mexico; you may go up in a balloon, or down a hole in the ground; and without doing one stroke of work, without adding one iota to the wealth of the community . . . you will be rich."

The landowner's profit, George maintained, is merely a tax on the truly productive factors of production, labor, and capital. And George's solution was to tax away the entire rental value of land, using the proceeds to abolish all other taxes. "Taxation which diminishes the earnings of the laborer or the returns of the capitalist," George argued in good supply-side fashion, "tends to render the one less industrious and intelligent, the other less disposed to save and invest." But a tax on land cannot reduce productivity since land alone is not productive and in any event cannot be withdrawn. George believed his proposal would, in one swoop, "raise wages, increase the earnings of capital, extirpate pauperism, abolish poverty, give remunerative employment to whoever wishes it, afford free scope to human powers, lessen crime, elevate morals and taste and intelligence, purify government, and carry civilization to yet nobler heights."

Obviously there are problems with this magic cure-all. George exaggerates the importance of land as the root of all economic evil, and he certainly was wrong that economic progress would inevitably bring increasing squalor and impoverishment if his ideas were not adopted.

On the other hand, his instinct that the hidden "landowners tax" on the productive elements of society would grow with time and prosperity is probably correct. According to Federal Reserve figures, during the postwar boom era the share of America's national wealth represented by the value of land has grown from a fifth ($155 billion out of $786 billion) in 1946 to a quarter ($3.53 trillion out of $14.6 trillion) in 1988. There is the same amount of land in America as there was in 1946, but landowners' claim on all the wealth that *has* been produced since then—buildings, cars, Cuisinarts, Chicken McNuggets—has grown disproportionately.

In Japan, according to figures in Emmott's book, the increase in real estate values over two recent years was equal to almost one-and-a-half times the nation's GNP. That means landowners' claims on the nation's resources grew almost as fast as those resources themselves.

Real estate has always led the "Forbes 400" list of the richest Americans as the primary source of large fortunes. In the 1989 list, just published, it slips behind manufacturing for the first time with 77 (compared with 80) out of 400. Forbes blames the recent price dip. But few on the list don't owe at least a part of their wealth to the long previous run-up in real estate or to ownership of mineral resources such as oil and gas. Outside of the United States, seven of the ten biggest fortunes are based primarily on real estate. America's richest man, John Kluge, increased his fortune by $2 billion (to $5.2 billion) last year by the simple expedient of owning cellular telephone franchises given away free by the U.S. government. (See "The Phone Flushaway" by David Ellen, TNR, October 9.) Henry George was viciously witty about fortunes built on government-granted monopolies, "which are commonly confounded with the earnings of capital."

The most vehement objection to Georgism, through the years, has been that it's too late. Few current owners of land and other natural resources (or even government-granted monopolies) obtained them for free. To essentially expropriate their property (through 100 percent taxation of the profits) would be unfair. George is unsympathetic. He notes that even innocent landowners can lose their property in a legal dispute "if Quirk, Gammon & Snap can mouse out a technical flaw in your parchments or hunt up some forgotten heir." Why should it be any different in the case of "The People vs. The Landowners"? A clever point, but it doesn't really answer the question.

Nevertheless, George's ideas offer a useful lens through which to look at the world. What I like best about Henry George is the way he combines radical

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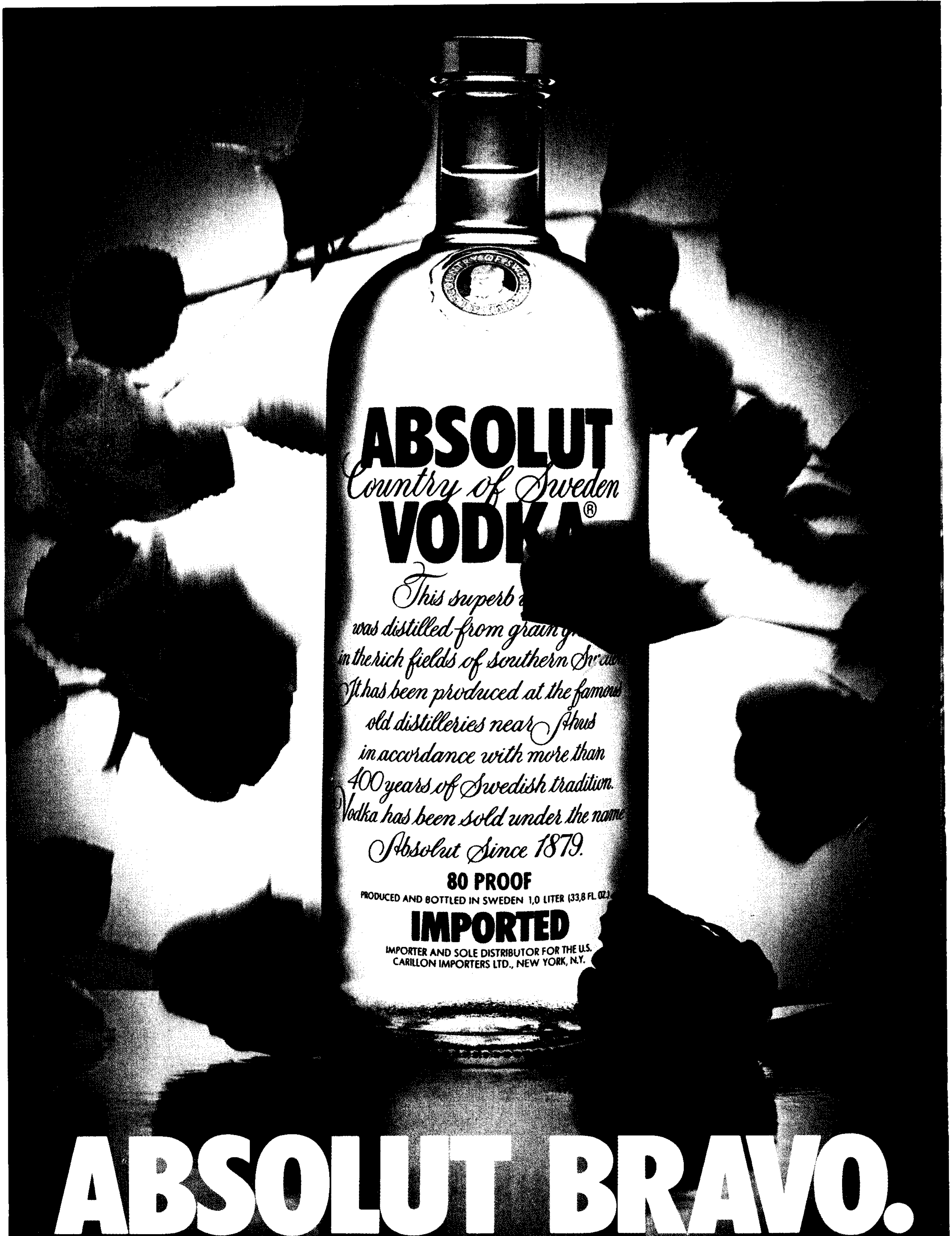
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NOVEMBER 6, 1989

AFTER THE REVOLUTIONS

It was inevitable, perhaps, that an ahistorical culture like our own would make a fetish of anniversaries. They are a particularly easy kind of historical consciousness, a mingling of mere fact and pure sentiment, a way of turning even tragedy into nostalgia. All these centennials and bicentennials allow us to feel that we possess a past that is, in truth, regularly slipping through our fingers. We celebrate the dates so that we can dodge, or twist, their meanings. How many Americans preparing to celebrate (and cash in on) the 500th anniversary of Columbus's landfall in the New World know anything about the moral and cultural complexities of that epochal accident?

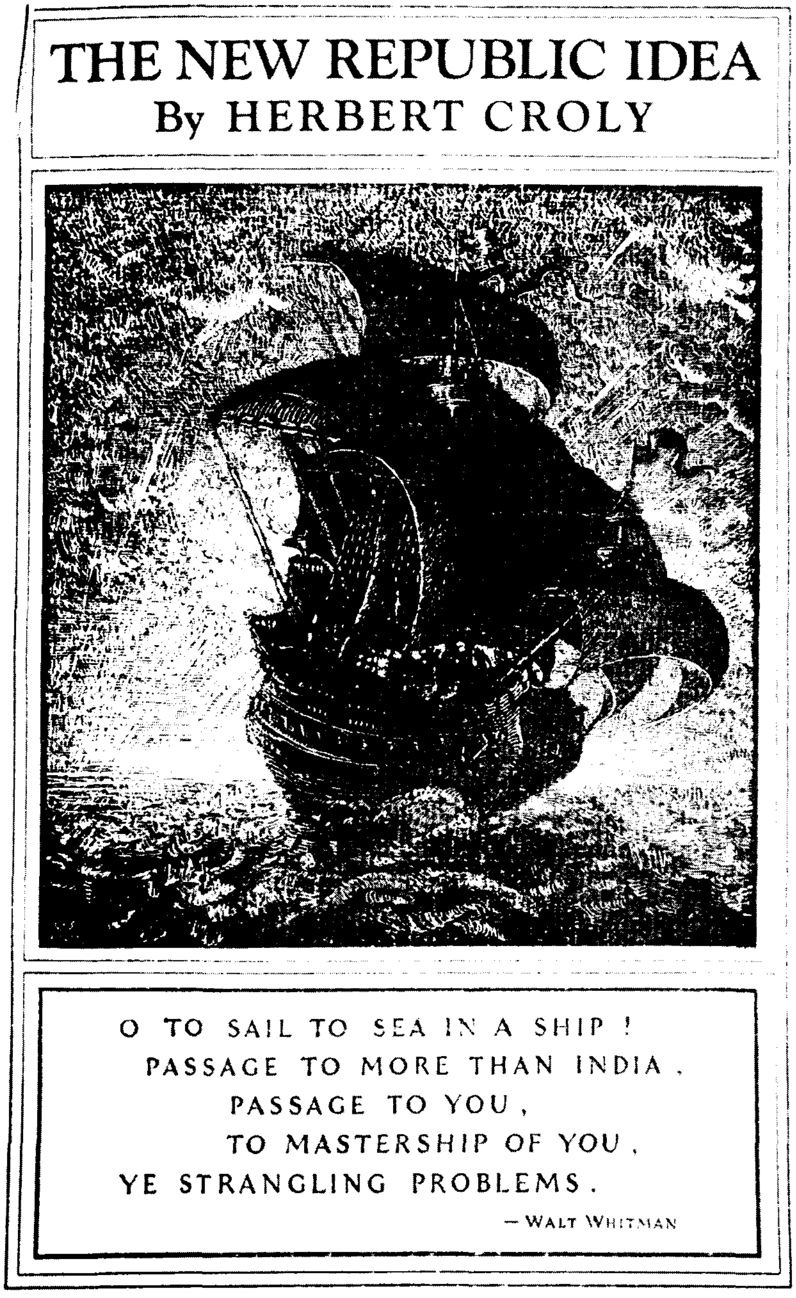
And yet anniversaries may be serious things. They make you—they make us—reflect on the magnitude of change, on the nature of constancy, on what time does, or tries to do, to principle. THE NEW REPUBLIC has tried to live always with, and sometimes by, its past; but many of the ghosts that haunt our halls are not on speaking terms with each other. All the generations of editors and writers at this magazine have thought of themselves, not altogether vainly, as stewards of an institution that matters to the country and the culture. As we turn 75, we expect to be compared with our history. We compare ourselves with it. Our predecessors were not always right, even if (and often because) they were left. With this issue we wish to reflect on the turbulent world of our years, which are most of the years of a grim but sometimes glad century.

The world into which THE NEW REPUBLIC was born in 1914 was already three months at war. Europe was still history's main address in the West. But what was until 1939 known simply and grandly as the Great War lured America from an insularity to which, despite the chronic skittishness about foreign entanglements that first reared itself in the rejection of the League of Nations, it was never to return. World War I proved to be a nightmare of unanticipated consequences. It is unlikely that the top-hatted statesmen in London and Paris who decided to thwart the imperial hunger of Germany and its feeble Habsburg and Ottoman allies ever contemplated that they would unleash (or at least inspire) forces that would bring doom to the British and French empires as well. And even before the war was out, the regime of the czarist autocrats in Russia, allied with the democracies as their successors would be a generation later, had crumbled and the road to the Bolshevik seizure of power was open.

75th ANNIVERSARY

In the aftermath of the Great War, two great fevers spread in Europe and then beyond. The first was the passion for revolutionary transformation, which engaged men and women of progressive temperament even in America (where they seemed fated to be cheerleaders, cheated by American destiny). We are a little astonished, and we are all a little privileged, to observe that this passion is largely spent, its moral authority at last receding into the past along with the spectacularly bloody regimes of Hitler and of Stalin, Mao, and most of their emulators. The intellectual undoing of totalitarianism, its economic failure, its political ruthlessness, its moral repugnance have never been more abundantly evident than in these days of our anniversary. The effort to retrieve productivity and freedom from the habits of collectivism and terror is the great adventure of the day. The recent events in Eastern Europe make 1989 an annus mirabilis of freedom, a season of liberation and inspiration in the First, Second, and Third Worlds. We are living, at last, in ethically exciting times.

The other fever that raged during our and the century's youth was nationalism. Toward this fever those same Americans of sunny disposition brought a rather more ambivalent attitude. Nationalism was fine far away; and the nationalism of the colonized and formerly colonized was especially admirable when it was mixed, however crudely, with the heady universalism of class struggle. But nationalism in Europe or the United States was an abomination to the high-minded. They comforted themselves with the thought that it would soon all pass. Some of them wrote books proclaiming nationalism's demise. It didn't die, of course. After 1992 we will see again whether transnational institutions can supplant national sentiment. Probably not. In any event, after the defeat of fascism, it turned out that it was precisely the developed and democratic parts of the world, our parts, that had least to fear from this unleashed force. But nationalism and the nation-state did not fit naturally or comfortably on many of the peoples for whom it was meant to be the way into real history. Imperialism was morally and historically hard to defend; and yet many of its newly liberated victims seemed to love the tribes and the sects that made them strangers or enemies more than they love the nations they cobbled out of those colonial frontiers. Most of them, alas, abjured constitutionalism and preferred power to development, authenticity to justice. Even in the energetic areas of the Third World where entrepreneurship has brought wealth, it has not quite brought democracy. The career of national self-determination in this century has not been a very happy one.



THE NEW REPUBLIC IDEA
By HERBERT CROLY

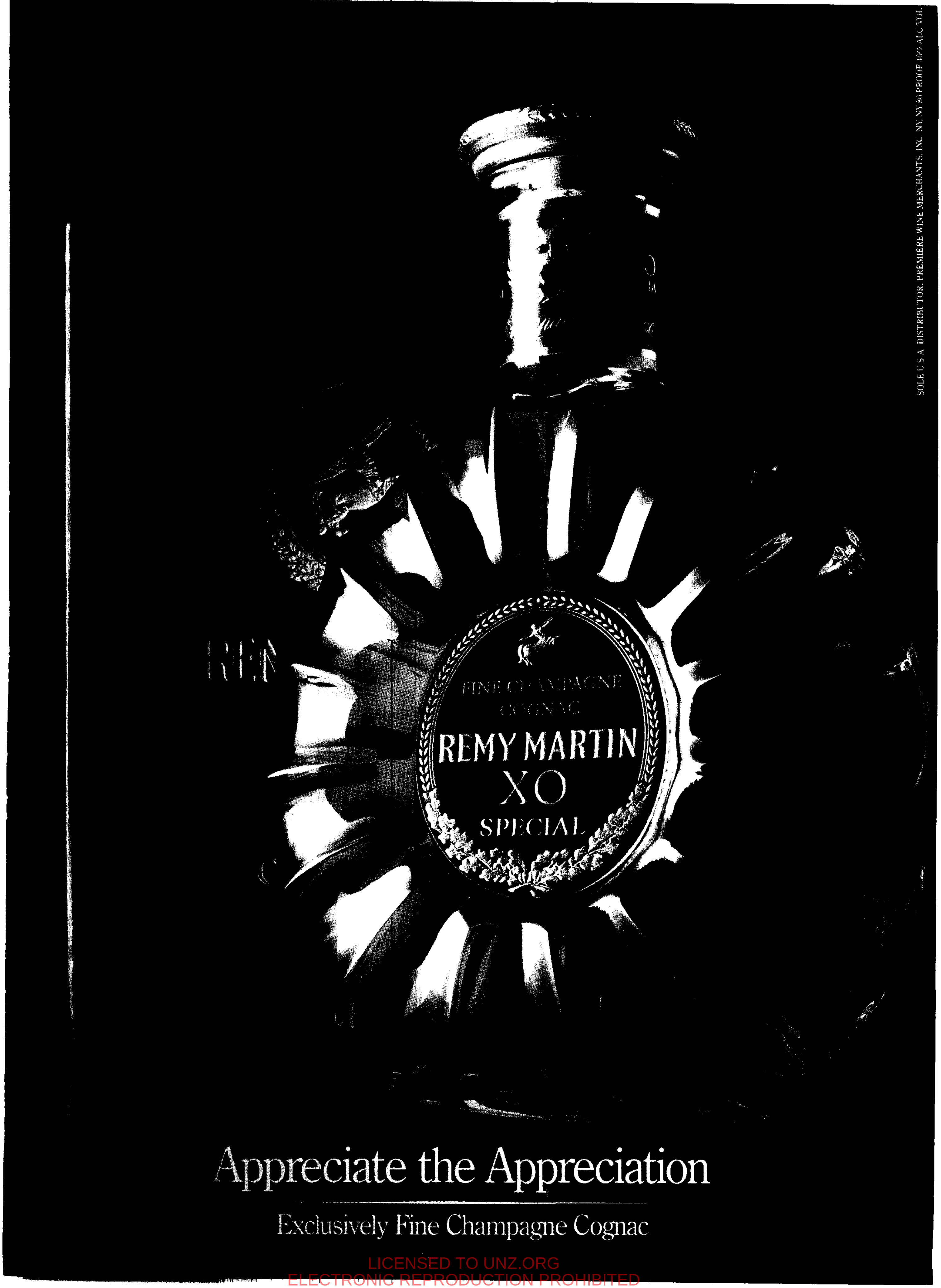
O TO SAIL TO SEA IN A SHIP!
PASSAGE TO MORE THAN INDIA,
PASSAGE TO YOU,
TO MASTERSHIP OF YOU,
YE STRANGLING PROBLEMS.

— WALT WHITMAN

COVER, PAMPHLET DISTRIBUTED WITH DECEMBER 6, 1922, ISSUE

In the West, the second fever has returned to haunt the first; and may it rage. Beyond the material and the spiritual disasters of totalitarianism, it is the revival of nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe that will likely be the proximate cause of the withering away of the Communist system. Peoples long consigned to the revolutionary's beloved dustbin of history, peoples whose names we never thought to hear on anyone's lips again, those epiphenomenal and superstructural precincts of human life that totalitarianism put down for 50 years, are historical actors. The "captive nations" (remember how smugly the phrase was commonly used, as if these peoples deserved their grim destiny) are growing less captive by the hour. These nationalisms have their ugly sides. In Russia and Poland, for example, echoes of xenophobia, even echoes of fascism, indeed of clerical fascism, have reminded us that there is a heart of darkness still pounding in Europe. Better to be clear-eyed, to cultivate what Rebecca West called, in THE NEW REPUBLIC's very first issue (reprinted and bound into this one), "an unsurprisable mind." There are many roads back from communism, and some of them lead to barbarism.

Hopeful, then, at 75, but unsurprisable. The shadow of nuclear war may be receding from these jittery times, more for reasons of solvency than sensibility; but we are not there yet, and the world will still be dogged by the fearful availability of different weapons of mass killing, the instruments of chemical and biological warfare easily available to states motivated by millenarian vengeance. The scientific imagination for destruction has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been matched, in ardor and in achievement, by the scientific imagination for the improvement of life, by the efforts to extend life, to cure disease, to maximize nutrition, to enlarge through computers and fiber optics the very enterprise of knowledge itself. The achievements of social science and of social policy have, to say the least, been far less impressive. The perils to the environment, for example, seem steadily to grow. Still, with any luck, we will mark our anniversary year as the time when the dangers to nature finally penetrated the consciousness of the people and the politicians, when the organized interests that contrive to make us weary of the sensible pessimism about our air and our water and the resources of our planet will be exposed for the concupiscent cynics they are.

These 75 years have not exactly been lacking in moral and political magnitude at home, either. The liberalism that the founders of TNR helped to invent—what Brandeis modestly called practical justice—has become, not without struggle, the common climate of American life. We look gladly on that. The institutions of decency established during the New Deal and later have proved their perdurability; the Darwinist impulses of Reaganism came and went. Whatever else he may be, George Bush is no Ronald Reagan. But here, too, we wish to be unsurprisable. Today American society is not at peace with itself. Its losers are all around. Its wealth, or much of it, is callously acquired and stupidly spent. (This wealth, it sometimes seems, endangers itself.) Its cities are, more and more, dystopias. They stink of guns. An unconscionable number of American families are in ruins. A cheap white powder is killing people and mocking the reason to live here. We don't believe anymore, at this late date in the history of modern American social engineering, that these other problems are easily solved, that dollars and laws will heal all wounds. The evidence about some of the remedies so far attempted perplexes us. But neither are we ready, for that reason, to roll down our sleeves.

The force that most threatens to damage American society—it is chilling to say so, when our recollections of the most extraordinary social transformation in American history are still so fresh—is race. In the cities, certainly, the divisions of race—psychological, economic, and social—have never seemed so deep. There have been palpable improvements in the condition of black Americans, but they do not seem much to have modified the black grievance. A shocking number of blacks are in a state of advanced despair. One out of nine adult black men is in prison or on probation or parole; and the inner-city drug lords are getting younger. To many blacks, the success of the black community in American politics seems beside the point, as they watch other minorities climb past them up the ladder. The prospect of a black man as Mayor of New York may lift their spirits, and the levels of their participation in society; but black victories during the last decades in Atlanta, Detroit, Chicago, Newark, Washington, and elsewhere have not reversed the squalor and the pain.

The black complaint against America is historically grounded. Racism is a permanent stain upon the United States, period. But the continuous collective contrition demanded by many blacks is not quite the answer, and not always apt. White guilt is a poor substitute for black progress. Such progress will not be achieved except by thinking courageously about the convolutedness of the problem. The demagoguery and the utterly symbolic politics of Malcolm's many heirs will not mobilize the black community's gifts for change; they will mobilize only its fears and hatreds, and divide American society even more deeply. We may quarrel over the limits of social policy, but not even the optimists are really hopeful. For a generation, there has been scarcely an idea for alleviating poverty, from any source, that has stirred the public imagination. The cheerless results of affirmative action should warn against the distortion of policy by piety. College and university task forces aim to increase the number of black faculty, but there are not nearly enough black professors available (or black graduate students, or black undergraduates, or blacks who finish high school), and so unqualified blacks are hired to teach. And it is not white students who usually suffer from these teachers. Is this justice? Is this equality? We will speak bleakly, anniversary or not. We do not see an obvious way out of the black misery. Right now, we can't even imagine one. In this matter, we would wish to be surprisable.

A celebration that fails to contain some sadness, that rides euphorically over truth, is not a celebration but an illusion. If there is a constant thread that runs through the confusing history of TNR during the past 75 years, it is the difficulty, and the necessity, of mixing the ideal and the real. Kant said that a fanatic is somebody who dreams according to principles. We like to think that we understand the difference between dreams and principles. Principles, if they are to live, must ready themselves for the intractability of the world. We are all "for" peace; but there is the fact that we have enemies, and the fact that they, too, have not disarmed. We are all "for" civil rights; but there is the fact of the underclass, and the fact of the growing popularity of separatist sentiments in the black community. We are all "for" prosperity; but there is the fact of poverty, and the prestige of greed—a greed that even conspires to expatriate our prosperity to others.

The human world is, among other things, a place of power. American liberalism once knew how to respect power without respecting it overmuch. The men who founded this magazine understood that there need be no contradiction between strength and justice—indeed, that strength held wisely is justice's friend. There is, of course, the danger of complacency, of giving the hard and stubborn world more than its due, of being realists only. But we still believe in the possibility of change, in the moral and historical grandeur of individual and social action—and in the importance of ideas as the seeds of change and the springs of action. Otherwise we may as well let television have it all. ●

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NOTEBOOK

HURRY UP PLEASE IT'S TIME: Two House task forces on ethics are talking about ending the loophole that permits retiring Representatives to transfer leftover campaign contributions to their personal checking accounts when they retire. These "closeouts" have been a scandal since Congress allowed them under a grandfather clause in the 1980 federal election law: taking money from people trying to influence legislation is criminal bribery where Congress hasn't zoned it legal. Several Congressmen took advantage of this perk last year, and 186 more have the option of plundering their war chests—some with more than $1,000,000 accumulated—if they quit now. The catch is that both ethics committees want to close the barn door after the House is gone. One recommends waiting until 1991, the other until '93, to change the law. The point of this delay is a long, slow last call for boodle.

THE EXXON CHAIR OF P.R.: In another bit of ethical fine tuning, Congress has decided it's now OK to accept gifts from corporations and individuals for the interior enhancement of the Capitol buildings themselves. This provision, tacked on to an obscure public lands bill for minimum visibility, takes the idea of lobbying more literally than ever before by allowing interest groups actually to furnish House and Senate offices. All donations of art and antiques are subject to approval by the newly created U.S. Capitol Preservation Commission. Question for your Representative or Senator next time he or she displays a sudden enthusiasm for some special interest tax break: "Who's your decorator?"

BZZZZ: Is it possible to craft a press release that consists entirely of state-of-the-art Washington buzzwords (plus utility words such as "the," "is," "and," and "of")? The answer appears to be yes, judging from the announcement of the founding of Cornerstone Associates, Inc., a new "strategic issues management firm specializing in government relations, corporate communications, and public policy"—see what we mean? "Cornerstone is a new kind of company that seeks to be a catalyst for constructive change in the 1990s and beyond," this document actually says. "Its mission is to help American companies and organizations develop and communicate strategies to meet the challenges of an international environment characterized by rapid economic, technological, and social change that often transcends national borders." A drumroll and a Pacific Rim shot, please.

FUN WITH GUNS, I: It's a shame that Darrell Huff and Irving Zeiss, the authors of *How to Lie with Statistics*, aren't around to dissect *NRAction*, the annoyingly named but unfailingly zany monthly magazine of the gun lobby. Check this riveting headline, from last month's issue: SHOOTING: 3,000 TIMES SAFER THAN FOOTBALL. The claim isn't plausible enough to demand refutation, but it's worth noting that the NRA's comparison is between tackle football and "non-hunting recreational shooting," and that it ignores the issue of how many people die during these activities (to say nothing of the fatalities caused by recreational hunting, non-recreational hunting, and regular old shooting). It's true, of course, that more people sustain minor injuries on the gridiron than on rifle ranges; but many, many more of the recreational shooters who do get hurt go straight to the End Zone.

FUN WITH GUNS, II: Elsewhere the NRA continues to lie without statistics. A recent advertisement in the September issue of *American Rifleman* decries bills sponsored by Senators Howard Metzenbaum and Dennis DeConcini that would ban semiautomatic assault weapons (popular with non-hunting recreational shooters). Among the false claims made by the ad are that the bills would assess a $200 transfer tax per gun, require that owners be fingerprinted, allow government agents to decide who should own semiautomatic guns, and restrict their interstate transport. These all sound like good ideas, by the way. The NRA's opposition to a bill that doesn't even include such sensible provisions is, as usual, trigger-happy.

HE'S BACK AGAIN, AGAIN: Another favorite newsletter of ours is the controlled-circulation "Memorandum From John H. Taylor," which serves as a sort of court circular for the Nixon government-in-exile. For connoisseurs of Nixonalia this occasional publication details the comings and goings, pronouncements and publications, of the former President. In the October 4 edition, Taylor offers delicious tidbits, including information about Nixon's next book, to be called *In the Arena: A Memoir of Victory, Defeat and Renewal* (renewal—that's the scary part), and his difficult decision to switch to MCI as his long-distance carrier in the wake of AT&T's sponsorship of the television version of *The Final Days*. There's also Nixonomical data for amateur Nixonomists: it's predicted that both Dick and Pat will be visible to the naked eye on the night of June 21, 1990, when they plan to celebrate their golden wedding anniversary. And Nixophiles have already begun to make pilgrimages to the site of the partially constructed Nixon Library in Yorba Linda, Orange County (where a municipal holiday is observed on RN's birthday). Lee Atwater, the scholarly, reflective chairman of the Republican National Committee, told 300 contributors who assembled not long ago that Nixon is "a man who history will remember as a great President." Nixon was not present, but according to the *Los Angeles Times* he answered Atwater in a letter as "one old-fashioned, hardball politician to another." Look forward to Atwatergate II: The Sequel.

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A movement in search of a leader.

THE DEMOCRACY GANG

By Morton Kondracke

There is an important job that needs to be filled in American politics: that of leader and chief spokesman for the democracy movement. This is a well-meaning but disorganized collection of intellectuals, officeholders, pundits, and activists—some liberal, some conservative, many neoconservative—who have a ready answer to the question: "If the cold war really ends, what's to be the purpose of American foreign policy?" Their answer is: "To help democracy spread around the world." But they (all right, we) lack the political power to make it more than a rhetorical priority on the nation's agenda. President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker, for example, will hail the idea of democracy in their speeches, but they have only pittances for Poland and Hungary and are more worried about offending Deng Xiaoping than they are eager to champion the students of Tiananmen Square. They are pragmatists, not pioneers.

The democracy movement is not a collection of woolly Wilsonians. It contains people who are wise and prudent, as well as idealistic. What the movement lacks is a leader who will make democracy-promotion his chief political activity.

The membership includes theologians such as Michael Novak and Richard John Neuhaus; columnists such as Charles Krauthammer and Ben Wattenberg; Republican politicians such as John McCain, Richard Lugar, Henry Hyde, Jonathan Miller, Nancy Kassebaum, and John Porter, among others; Democratic politicians such as Stephen Solarz, Lee Hamilton, Chuck Robb, Edward Kennedy, Bill Bradley, and Dante Fascell, among others. Jimmy Carter and Walter Mondale are part of it. It has allies in the Bush administration, including Bernard Aronson, the Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America; Robert Zoellick, Counselor at the State Department; State Department human rights chief Richard Schifter; and, believe it or not, Vice President Dan Quayle, who seems to mean it when he delivers democracy lectures in Central America and Asia. And there are organizations that support it, including Human Rights Watch, Freedom House, the National Endowment for Democracy, and the AFL-CIO, which sustained Solidarity in Poland when no one else thought it could survive.

The movement lost its last real leader when Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan resigned the post ten years ago to secure his re-election in New York and then got interested in economics and finance. He's still a member of the movement but is no longer out in front. Ronald Reagan, with democracy movement moles putting inspiring words in his mouth, made do as a leader, but his real purpose was to bring the Soviet Union to heel, and democracy was a convenient banner under which to do it. In the Philippines, Reagan might have supported Ferdinand Marcos right over a cliff, but the democracy moles (including Paul Wolfowitz, now an Undersecretary of Defense, and former State Department human rights chief Elliott Abrams) had decided that continued Marcos rule would lead to a Communist victory and got Reagan to maneuver him out of office.

Outside the United States is where the real heroes of the democracy movement live. Just to call part of the roll is to justify the movement, whose raison d'être is to help such people as these to succeed (or, in some cases, simply to survive): Lech Walesa, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, and the rest of Solidarity; Feng Lizhi, Chen Yizi, and the rest of China's democracy movement; Andrei Sakharov, *Glasnost* editor Sergei Grigoryants, and the Democratic Union in the Soviet Union; Vaclev Havel and Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia; the New Forum in East Germany; Guillermo Endarra, Guillermo Ford, and Ricardo Arias and others in the anti-Noriega civic opposition in Panama; writer-politician Mario Vargas Llosa and capitalist theoretician Hernando DeSoto in Peru; Corazon Aquino in the Philippines; Oscar Arias in Costa Rica; Violeta Chamorro and the rest of the internal opposition in Nicaragua; Helen Suzman and Desmond Tutu in South Africa; and the anti-Pinochet democrats in Chile. There are thousands of others in countries that are newly free and not yet free.

The American branch of the democracy movement believes that a primary purpose of American foreign policy should be to aid such people with money, political support, technical advice, diplomatic intervention, military assistance (in El Salvador and the Philippines, for example), and, on rare occasions (the case of Panama comes to mind), direct or covert use of force. They think this is true whether or not the Soviet threat is lifting. In fact, some of them (I mean, us) think it was the main idea behind fighting communism in the first place: to secure liberty for everyone, not just ourselves. This is

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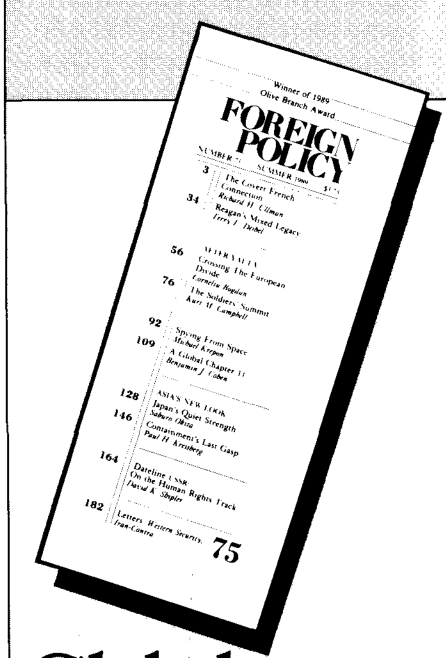

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FOREIGN POLICY

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Global Reach, National Authority

Drawings by Vint Lawrence for FOREIGN POLICY.

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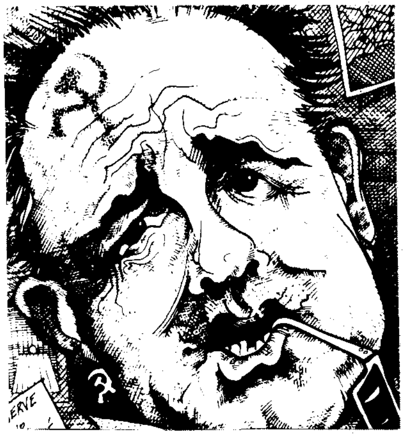

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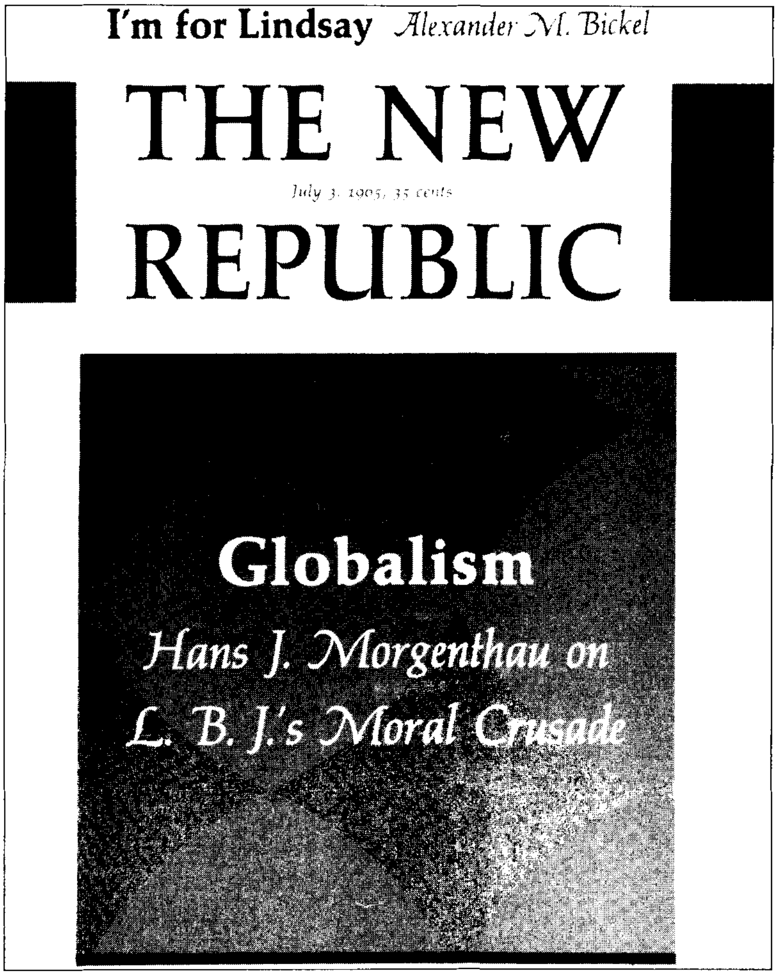
not just a moral crusade, but a matter of America's self-interest. Democracies don't go to war with one another. Capitalist democracies have the best chance to create and share the wealth that it takes to sustain internal peace.

But there are powerful political and intellectual forces in America that, if they do not overtly oppose the very idea of spreading democracy, at least put it at the bottom of America's policy agenda. The most voluble is the presently tiny "paleo-conservative" Fortress America movement headed by columnist Patrick Buchanan, who argued in a recent debate with neoconservative Wattenberg on the PBS show I moderate, "American Interests," that "this Mission Democracy thing" is "messianic globaloney," and that to "subvert governments through the National Endowment for Democracy . . . is an absurdity."

According to Buchanan, "It is not the business of the United States to dictate to 150 countries in the world what kind of government they ought to have. . . . My view is, leave the Chileans to solve their own problems. We have enough enemies in this world without making any more. . . . And if Poland tried to establish a king, and they have an independent country, I'll cheer the king." Buchanan indicated he wouldn't even mind if Poland became a fascist dictatorship. He is usually adamant about using force against Communists, but opposes doing so in Panama. In this, powerful elements of the Bush administration—especially in the Pentagon—completely agree.



I'm for Lindsay *Alexander M. Bickel*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

July 3, 1965, 35 cents

Globalism

Hans J. Morgenthau on L. B. J.'s Moral Crusade

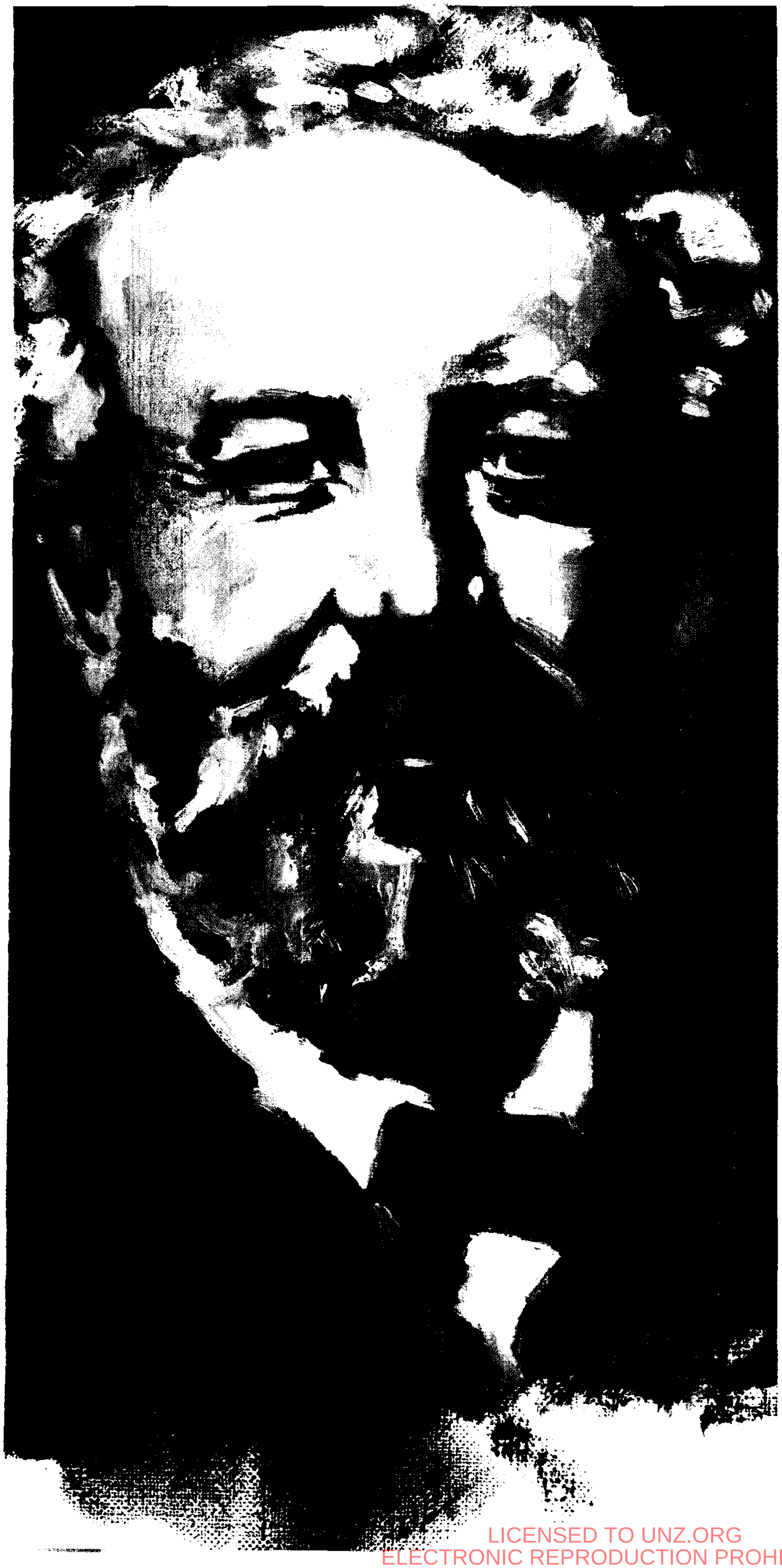
COVER, JULY 3, 1965

Buchanan has lots of allies, right, left, and center. Among his fellow paleo-cons, the *National Review* frequently prints isolationist tracts by Claes Ryn of Catholic University, Tom Bethell, and Joseph Sobran, and so does the *Wall Street Journal*'s editorial page. The *Journal* also provides a sounding board for libertarian isolationists such as Doug Bandow of the Cato Institute who think that what happens in the rest of the world is none of our business, so long as America has trading partners. Bandow and others of his persuasion, including Professor Earl Ravenal of Georgetown University, forget that to the extent that the Third World is poor and benighted, it can't trade.

Also on the right, some neoconservatives (such as philosopher Irving Kristol and defense expert Richard Perle) have long wanted to pull away from Europe (Perle doesn't like the Japanese much either) and adopt a unilateralist stance against the Soviet Union, pursuing American interests regardless of anyone else's opinion. Now they are augmented by the "End of History" school, which holds that our side has won the cold war and that Western-style liberal democracy is indisputably the wave of the future. The corollary is that, without Commies to fight, there's no reason to exercise ourselves about the Third World anymore.

Spokesmen for the democracy movement such as Wattenberg, NED President Carl Gershman, Freedom House's Penn Kemble, and others argue the opposite case: to help democrats in Communist nations is to make sure that the cold war really ends our way. They agree that most people in the world want democratic government, as demonstrated in Korea, China, the Philippines, and Panama. But, they say, in lots of places people and governments still need American help to get democracy and keep it.

In the political center, probably the most numerous group of would-be isolationists are ordinary members of Congress who, when the Soviet threat seems past, will want to slash defense outlays, balance the federal budget, and, with whatever money is available, expand domestic programs, not foreign aid. Representative David Obey, chairman of the House subcommittee that oversees the foreign aid budget, is an example. He says he would spend more money abroad, but only if President Bush raises taxes. Bush won't, and so there is only $15 million for NED, $319 million for Poland, and $25 million for Hungary. Walesa wants $10 billion for Poland. The democracy movement doesn't want to give it away without strings, but to offer it as an incentive for the devel-



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Jules Verne
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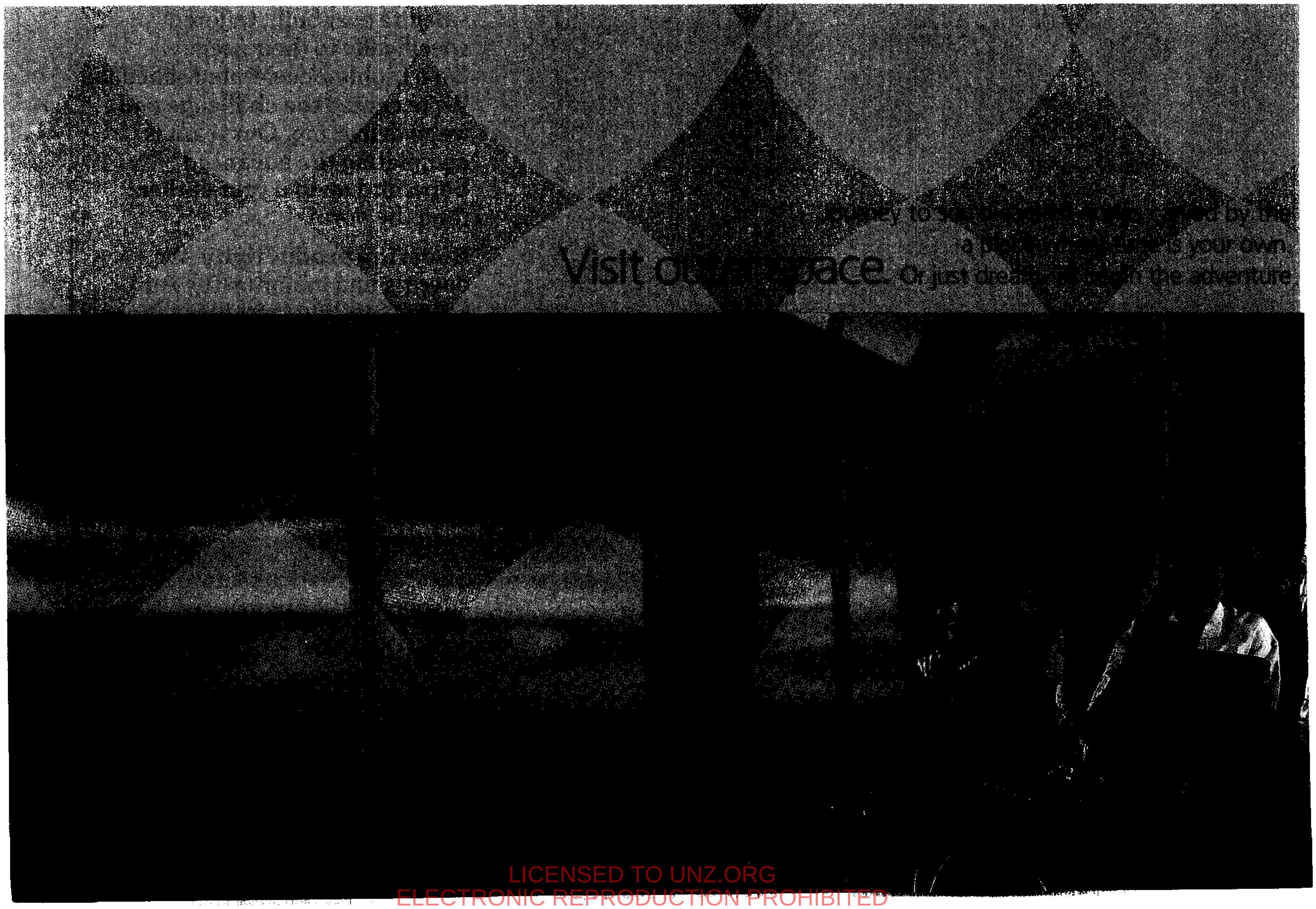
opment of fully democratic institutions and a market economy. Without a more powerful democracy movement, that won't happen.

To the center-left the democracy movement has adversaries among neoliberals, protectionists, and "realists." Further along the spectrum, there are left-wing isolationists, left-wing internationalists, and the far left. Neoliberals (whose guru is Charles Peters of the *Washington Monthly*) seem bored by foreign policy and regard democracy promotion as some sort of neocon boondoggle. To their credit, though, they are not protectionists and do want to invest in a more competitive America. Protectionists (with House Majority Leader Dick Gephardt in the lead) want to punish our strategic allies because they are successful trade competitors. The trade barriers they'd erect would not only lose us friends, but would lock out the products of poor Third World countries and keep them poor.

The "realist" school—exemplified by writers James Chace, Ronald Steel, Christopher Layne, Alan Tonelson, and Paul Kennedy—takes a position that begins as merely anti-interventionist but often ends up isolationist. The argument is that America, trying to act as an imperial power, has become overextended and needs to pull back and repair its domestic economy. This school has received a major intellectual boost in a book titled *Barbarian Sentiments: How the American Century Ends* (Hill and Wang), by *New Yorker* writer William Pfaff, that's just been nominated for a National Book Award.

Pfaff, who lives in Paris, worries that post-cold war America is about to revert to its pre-World War II isolationism and leave Europe in turmoil as the Soviet empire collapses. "We are ready to despise the world again, as we did in the past, our friends and clients perhaps more than our official Soviet enemies," he says. But he also offers a rationale for realists and isolationists. He claims, using arguments rich in anthropology and history, that Wilsonianism (in both its original and its contemporary versions) is based on the false premise that the rest of the world wants to be like America and could become so if it wanted to be. He thinks that disillusionment with efforts to bring about the impossible—in Vietnam, Iran, and Central America—will produce the isolationism he fears. He argues that America should stick with Europe and drop the rest of the world. Some of his colleagues would like to drop Europe, too.

Heading further left, there are: liberal isolationists such as Representatives Patricia Schroeder and Gary Studds who (like Buchanan) want to bring American forces home as soon as possible and don't want to spend much on NED or AID either; and liberal internationalists such as Senator Tom Harkin and columnist Mary McGrory who practice selective democracy promotion, cheering when we intervene against the government in Chile, but balking when we do so in Nicaragua. And then there's the left, typified by the Institute for Policy Studies and the *Nation*, which seems to think that America and its works are the scourge of the earth,



and that we should withdraw and allow "progressive forces" to prevail.

Clearly, Pfaff and other realists have it partly right: some places are far from ready for democracy. Some may never be. Still, even in the hardest places—Syria, for example, or sub-Saharan Africa—the United States can provide scholarships, help organize neighborhood associations and the other building blocks of civic society, and (in Michael Novak's phrase) "spread the sacred texts" of democracy, beginning with *The Federalist*. Novak quotes one Polish reformer as saying that "the most important thinker in Eastern Europe right now is James Madison."

In many other places, the ground is more fertile. Spain and Portugal have become democracies in recent years; Portugal, especially, did so with U.S. and West German help. Chile is on its way, with U.S. election-organizing assistance. Argentina, Brazil, Peru, and the Philippines clearly want democracy, but need help to preserve it. Debt reduction is one way that the United States can help. Another is inculcation in the military of respect for civilian rule, and here U.S. military trainers can help. In addition, the United States can supply what Kemble calls "liberation technology"—fax machines, computers, photocopiers, and satellite dishes—to democratic groups. Buchanan is right about this: sometimes such aid is subversive of dictatorial governments. But the United States is not forcing anything on other people. It is aiding them in getting their governments to let them be heard.

Yet another contribution is training in economic reform to permit small entrepreneurs to incorporate and obtain credit. In Hong Kong, as DeSoto points out, it costs just $35 to form a small corporation, and the bureaucracy must process incorporation papers within three days, so the island has 27,000 corporations and is thriving economically. In Latin America, he says, it costs an average of $3,000 in fees and bribes and takes an average of a year, so there is usually stagnation.

By itself, of course, economic reform will not ensure democracy. Pinochet gave Chile a prosperous economy, but political freedom had to be wrested from him through internal and external political pressure. To save Hong Kong from losing its freedom when it reverts to Chinese control in 1997 may require intense diplomatic pressure, the use of economic and political sanctions, or even the threat of force.

Even if the Soviet Union ceases to be a threat, the spread of democracy and prosperity—or simply understanding and respect for pluralism—can reduce other menaces facing the world: ethnic hatred, religious fanaticism, and terrorism. A democracy movement will not eliminate such threats in our lifetime; we will continue to need armed forces, and sometimes we will have to use them. But America needs to stay the leader of the world's democracy movement, and for that, the movement itself needs a clear-speaking, clear-thinking leader. Bill Bradley, Al Gore—George Bush, too—your telephone is ringing. ●

wind. [illegible] lakes. [illegible] touch the sky [illegible]
To [illegible] Dine surround[illegible]ing scenery. [illegible]
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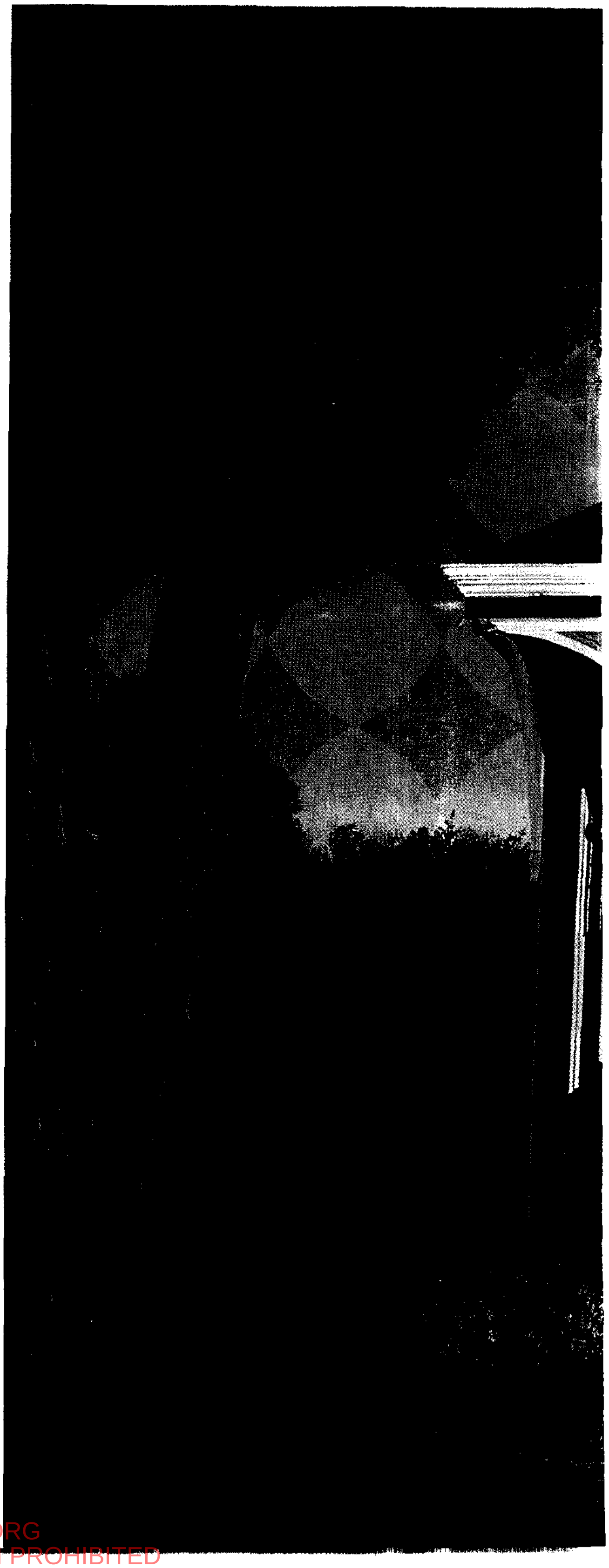

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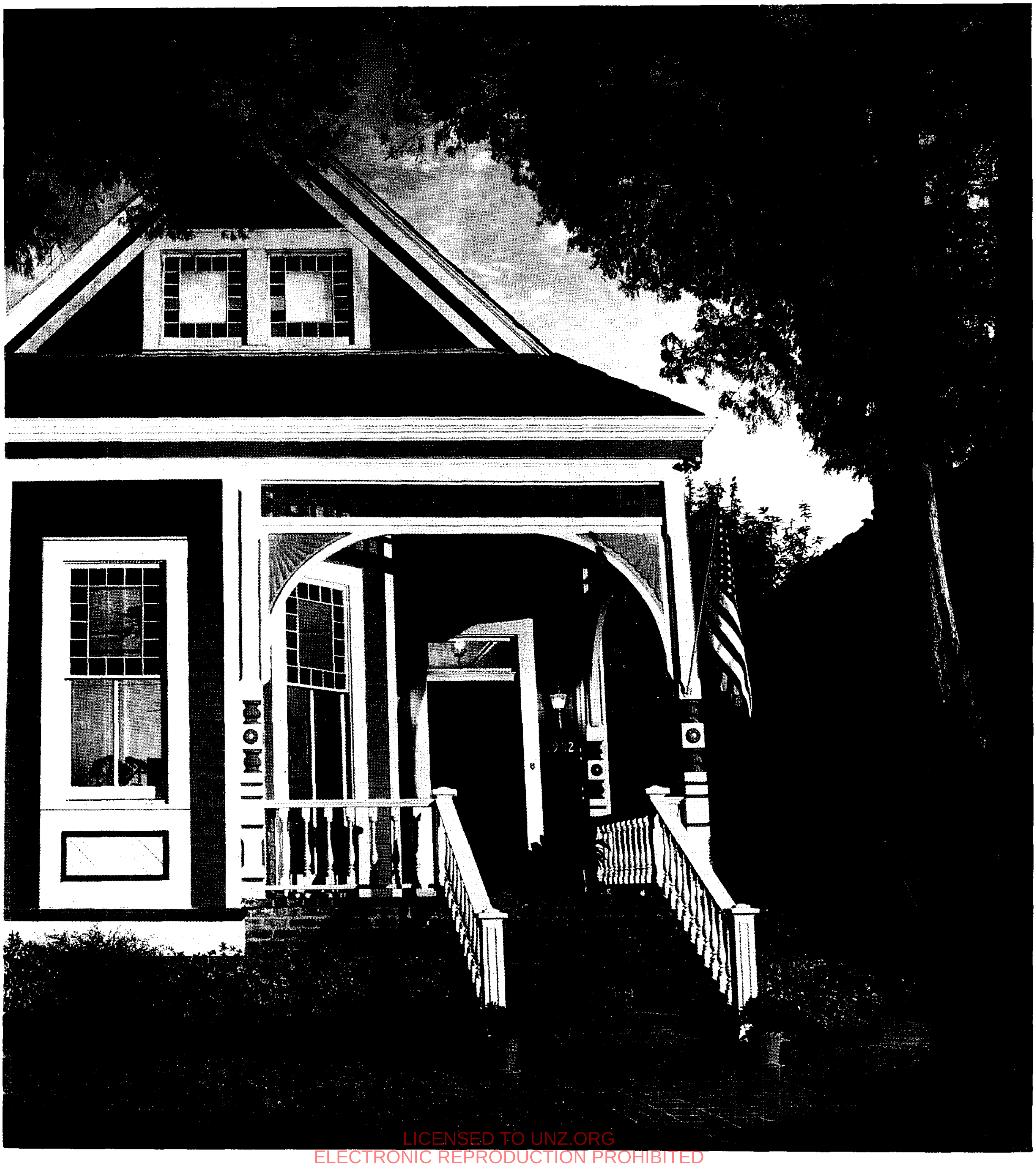

We must understand what we cannot forget.

THE ECOLOGY OF SURVIVAL

By Al Gore

Theories about history are built on sand. Yet millions have died believing in their ultimate truth. It's because we have paid such a high price for historical theorizing that we can ill afford to lose our perspective now, or to stop thinking about where we've been and what it tells us about where we're going. To paraphrase Santayana, those who cannot remember the past ought to be condemned to reread it.

Seventy-five years, the measure of one magazine, is now the measure of one human lifetime—the number of years an American child born today can expect to live. Looking back 75 years, we can accept or ignore any number of political, cultural, or strategic lessons. Looking ahead into the life of that child, however, we see two indisputable patterns. With the invention of nuclear weapons we changed the character of warfare in ways that must preclude any conflict on the scale of the one that began in 1914. That lesson is widely understood, and we have some basis for hoping that it will guide our future affairs. The second dramatic change has not yet been so widely accepted. Humankind has suddenly entered into a new relationship with the planet Earth. Our survival depends upon our capacity to grasp, and quickly, the extent to which the current pattern of world civilization threatens the ecological system that sustains life as we know it.

From this side of the Atlantic, at least, the future looked better in 1914. Back then America didn't need a coup in Panama; that year we opened the Canal. Productivity growth in the United States was almost too fast to measure. In the fall of 1913 a Model T came off the assembly line at Henry Ford's new Highland Park plant every 12 hours. By the spring of 1914 that plant was producing one car every hour. The world environment was as untrampled as the poppies in Flanders Fields. The biggest threat to the rain forest was Tarzan, created that year by Edgar Rice Burroughs.

From politics to art, the world was breaking loose from the old order. The acceleration of history was already well under way. Einstein's theory of relativity had jolted science. Cubism was fracturing the way artists interpreted the world. Ancient dynasties and immense empires began to die with the Archduke Ferdinand. The World War hardly made the world safe for democracy, but it did put the foes of democracy on notice. The period since then represents a succession of struggles between democratic powers and tyranny in all its guises. In 1914, as Europe descended into carnage, by far the greater number of the world's peoples lived under tyrannies. But of the major nations that went to war in Europe, only the established democracies survived with their political systems intact. The interwar years were marked by philosophical as well as geopolitical struggles on a global scale, with the ideologies of fascism, communism, and democracy in contention. In World War II, not only was fascism defeated; its exemplars underwent apparently permanent societal conversions, from which they emerged as democracies themselves. Now we appear to be experiencing the rapid dissolution of Communist tyranny. The process is advancing in Europe and perhaps gathering strength in Asia, the result of irresistible internal forces that can be set back but not permanently stopped.

In the developing worlds of Latin America, Africa, and Asia, the battle between democratic and tyrannical forms of government has been less decisive. Nevertheless, over the last decade the trend has been toward democratic forms, from Argentina and Brazil to the Philippines. Looking at this pattern, some conclude that humankind is maturing out of tutelage, throwing off submission to the arbitrary rule of those who claim legitimacy by divine right or historical "law" and embracing instead the self-rule that derives its legitimacy from the will of the electorate. Perhaps so. But experience ought to make us wary of premature declarations of victory, and we should certainly reject the idea that we have arrived at the end of political history. The human imagination is much too fertile for that, and the human capacity for inventing systems of political belief has not exhausted itself. We can expect that "isms" will continue to appear, displacing others in the hearts and minds of millions, over cycles of time that may run from decades to centuries and even to millennia.

Yet because of the events and accomplishments of the last 75 years, there are indeed critical, and permanent, new factors in the life of humanity. These relate to the physical world, whose constants are beyond the

AL GORE is a U.S. Senator from Tennessee.

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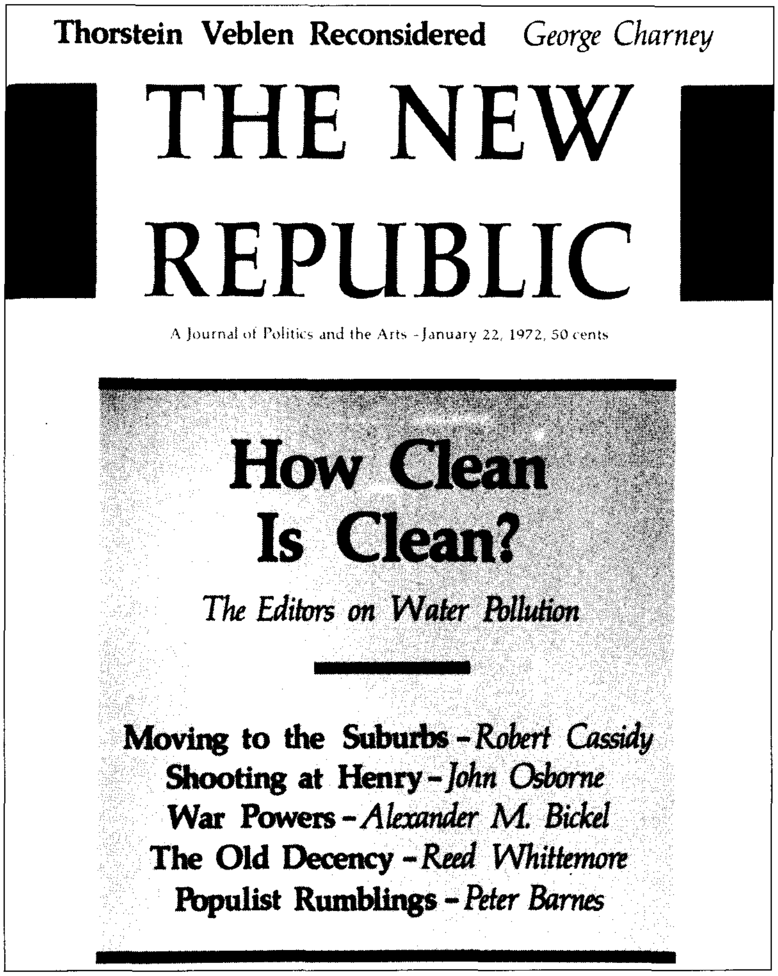
power of ideological manipulation. We have, in the course of a single life span, managed to grasp the levers of our own destruction: first, in the form of nuclear weapons; and second, in the form of the industrial destruction of the biosphere, which has begun to move ahead at geometric rates of increase. When you consider the relationship of the human species to the planet Earth, not much change is visible in a single year, in a single nation. Yet if you look at the entire pattern of that relationship from the beginning of the modern era in 1914 until today, the contrast is starkly clear.

In 422 years, from the time of Christopher Columbus until 1914, world population tripled, to 1.6 billion. In the last 75 years it has tripled again, to 5.2 billion. We are told that in the next 75 years it will double and perhaps even triple once more. Nearly every index of the impact of modern industrial society follows the same pattern of sudden, unprecedented acceleration. Americans consumed around 40 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity in 1914. Last year we used 60 times that much. U.S. production of synthetic organic chemicals (from PCBs to pesticides to plastics) has gone from almost nothing to 225 billion pounds per year—half a ton for every American. The world's fossil fuel use has increased ten times over, and with it, carbon dioxide has flooded the Earth's atmosphere. Other greenhouse gases have soared upward at similar rates: U.S. nitrogen oxide emissions are up 800 percent since 1914; methane concentrations have nearly doubled; and the world's emissions of chlorofluorocarbons, which had not yet been invented in 1914, have increased by 80 times since World War II, and are still doubling every decade, posing a deadly threat to the Earth's protective ozone shield.



Thorstein Veblen Reconsidered *George Charney*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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How Clean Is Clean?

The Editors on Water Pollution

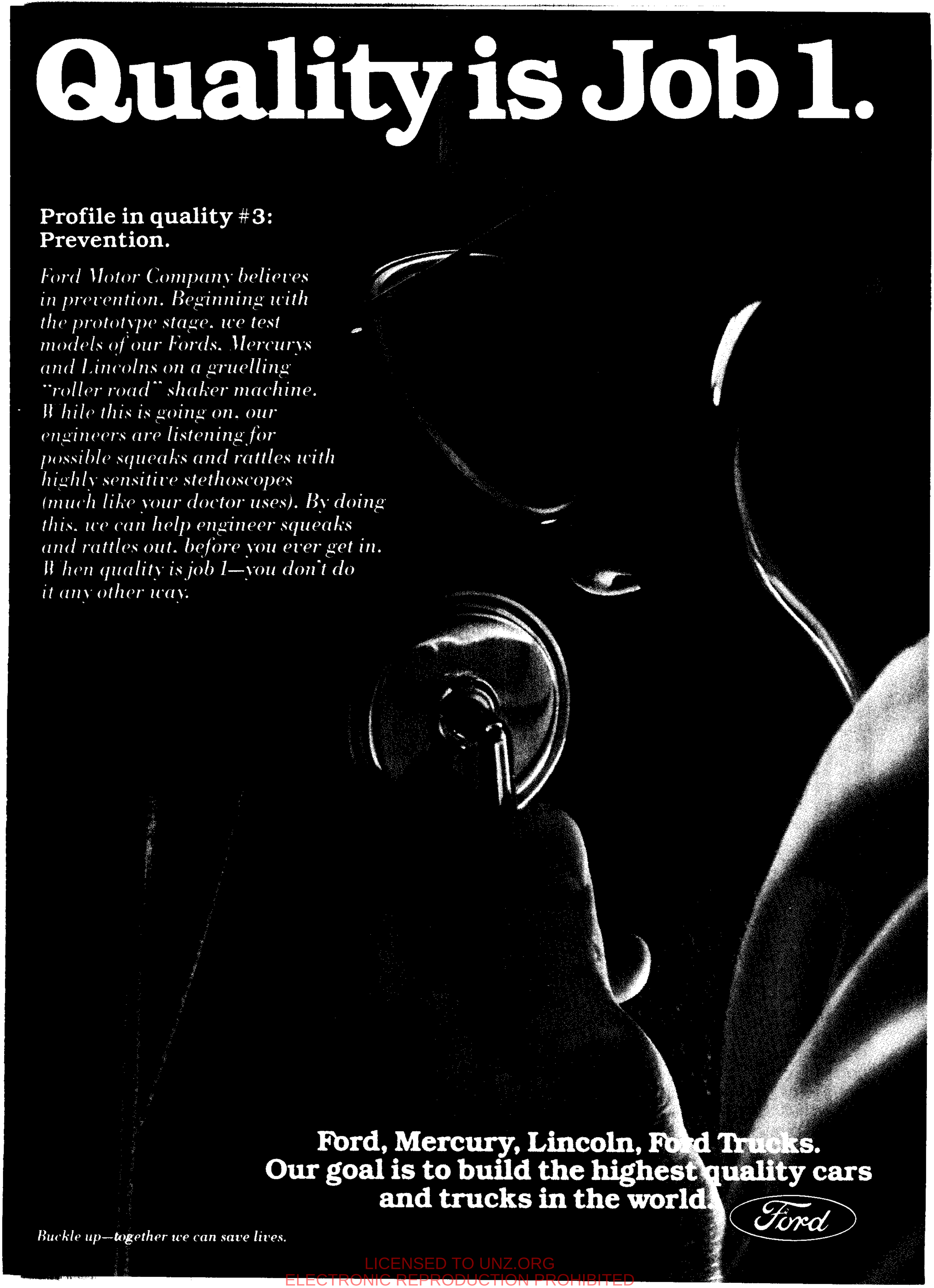
Moving to the Suburbs - ***Robert Cassidy***
Shooting at Henry - ***John Osborne***
War Powers - ***Alexander M. Bickel***
The Old Decency - ***Reed Whittemore***
Populist Rumblings - ***Peter Barnes***

COVER, JANUARY 22, 1972

The hole in the ozone layer is only the most widely accepted manifestation of a much broader challenge to the Earth's environment. We are destroying forest land at the rate of one acre per second; we are poisoning our rivers, lakes, groundwater, and oceans; we are causing living species to be destroyed at a rate 1,000 times greater than at any time in the last 65 million years; we are filling the atmosphere with gaseous wastes that threaten changes to the climatic system in the next 75 years as large as those that accompanied the ice ages over hundreds of thousands of years. These dramatic changes are taking place not only because the human population is surging and our standard of living has increased, but because we tolerate environmental vandalism on a global scale.

For 75 years the price we would have to pay for our actions has seemed impossibly remote. Only now are we beginning to see, in Ivan Ilych's phrase, "the shadow our future throws." Whether we look forward in hopes of glimpsing what the future holds or gaze backward at the events that have dominated the world since 1914, we see something that resembles one of those artist's depictions of relativity theory, with time and space curved like a checkerboard grid painted by Salvador Dali. Our political awareness of the world is shaped and bent by events. Vast calamities such as the world wars exert a powerful gravitational pull on every idea we have about the world around us. And, just as in Einstein's theory, future events can exert the same gravitational pull on our thinking as events in the past. The political will to slow down the nuclear arms race came from the feeling that we were being pulled toward a future we had never seen but didn't want. Now, as we are being drawn toward the brink of ecological collapse, we must be willing to consider drastic ecological action.

There is no way for humanity to forget its skills for self-destruction, by war upon each other or by war upon the environment. In an exchange of Promethean proportions, we have acquired deadly knowledge that we can never lose but must learn to keep under control forever. That is the new and permanent point of departure for political wisdom. And if we are to succeed in keeping civilization intact, it is clear that one ism must be revived and renewed: globalism—by which I mean not some kind of world order prescribed and imposed



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from above, but rather a sense of responsibility for the good order of the world, rising upward from all of its peoples, and ultimately manifesting itself in the behavior of their governments, both domestically and in international relations.

A new globalism cannot be based on some transformation of human nature, by which people will be endowed with new virtues of foresight and restraint. In the last 75 years we have had enough of efforts to create the New Man in one image or another. Jefferson's educated citizenry will have to suffice. The globalism we need can develop out of roots already universally present. It will be an enlightened, informed extension of our desire to survive, and of our often even more intense desire to provide for the survival and well-being of our children and grandchildren. Globalism will be marked by the sense that if our affairs are conducted on the basis of an unlimited struggle for supremacy—whether among nations or over nature—the result will be an increasingly high risk of almost immeasurable loss for all. It will be marked also by a sense that at some level, cooperation secures for all of us what strife cannot.

Mikhail Gorbachev now speaks as an advocate of a globalist approach based on mutual consent, rather than hegemony. It is certainly a revolution of sorts to hear such things from a Soviet leader. But it is well to remember that Gorbachev has at best caught up with the doctrine of collective security as propounded by Woodrow Wilson in 1918 and again by Franklin Roosevelt in 1945.

The essence of the doctrine of collective security is that security is indivisible and mutual: it must be provided for all, by actions to which all must contribute, or it exists for no one. That is certainly the lesson we must apply as we struggle to redefine our security relationship in military terms. Reductions of strategic and conventional weapons are desirable, but not in the abstract. They must seek a result in which the residual forces are perceived by all concerned parties to be stable, in the sense of lacking the capacity for decisive surprise. And reductions must be carried out in a political context that buttresses the expectation of peace and justifies diminished preparation for war.

But the notion of mutual security must now move from an exclusive concern with security as an issue of peace or war to a definition of security that includes the global environment. With that in mind, I have proposed a Strategic Environment Initiative (SEI). Let's face it: the Strategic Defense Initiative can't assure our survival for the next 75 years. A Strategic Environment Initiative might. I am no admirer of SDI, but one doesn't have to be an admirer to recognize that it drew together previously scattered facilities and resources and that it attracted a generous share of the government's budget for research and development. We need to approach the technological challenge of environmental protection and economic growth with at least the same intensity—and with comparable or greater levels of funding.

If we continue our current pattern of technology and production, we will be able to achieve economic growth in the near term only at the cost of massive environmental disorder in the not so distant future. For the developing world, the problems of reconciling economic growth and environmental protection are compounded by high rates of population growth and a massive debt burden. Yet the cooperation of Third World nations is crucial to controlling problems as vast as global warming. Their share of greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels could grow from about 20 percent today to as much as 60 percent by 2050. A Strategic Environment Initiative would promote environmentally sustainable development by identifying and spreading new technologies to developing countries, where 95 percent of world population growth will take place during the next century. Here in the United States, the Strategic Environment Initiative must modernize technologies and practices in every economic sector, from more fuel-efficient cars and energy-efficient appliances to manufacturing that relies on recycled material, to a second green revolution requiring fewer fertilizers and pesticides. The emerging consensus for environmental protection is opening the door to solutions once considered politically impossible.

It will not be enough, however, to change our laws, policies, and programs. We must also change the way we think about ourselves, our children, and our future. For a very long time, we have seen ourselves as separate from the world around us. At least since the beginning of the scientific method, and probably since Aristotle, we have seen nature as the object of our experiments, exploitation, and dominion. As scientists reflected on Einstein's revolution, they discovered that the act of observing alters what is observed. Heisenberg established that "uncertainty principle" in 1923. But its philosophical application is not limited to the subatomic world he described. In a kind of Heisenberg Principle writ large, we have altered—without realizing it—our relationship to nature itself. We must now create a new pattern of thinking in which we once again see ourselves as a part of the ecological system in which we live. We have lost, so to speak, our eco-librium.

How can we gain sufficient distance from ourselves to see a pattern that contains us in a larger context? My own religious faith teaches me that while we are given dominion over the Earth, we also are required to be good stewards of the Earth. If our actions cause the destruction of half the living species God put on this Earth during our lifetimes, we will have failed in the responsibility of stewardship. Are those actions, because of their result, "evil"? The answer depends not upon the everyday nature of the actions, but upon our knowledge of their consequences. For the individual actions that collectively produce the world's environmental evil are indeed banal when they are looked at one by one: the cutting of a tree, the flicking on of an air conditioner, the dumping of some inconvenient waste.

"Evil" and "good" are terms not used frequently by politicians. Yet I do not see how this problem can be solved without reference to spiritual values found in every faith. For many scientists on the edge of new discov-

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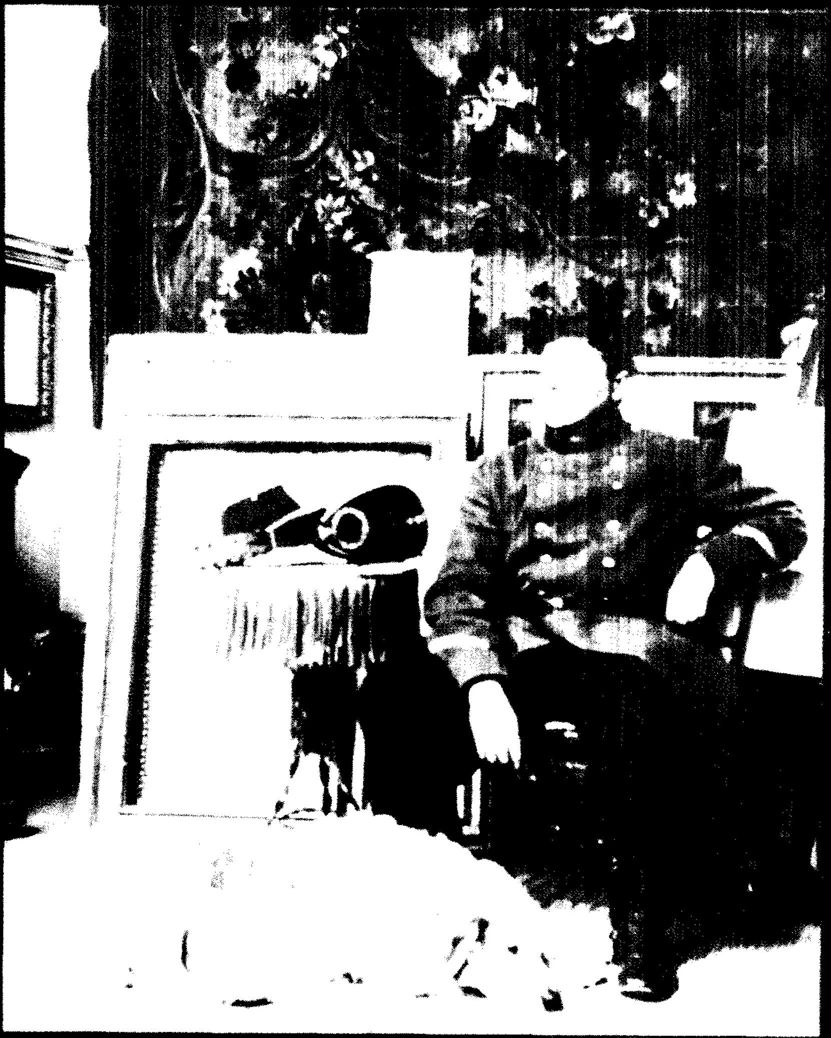
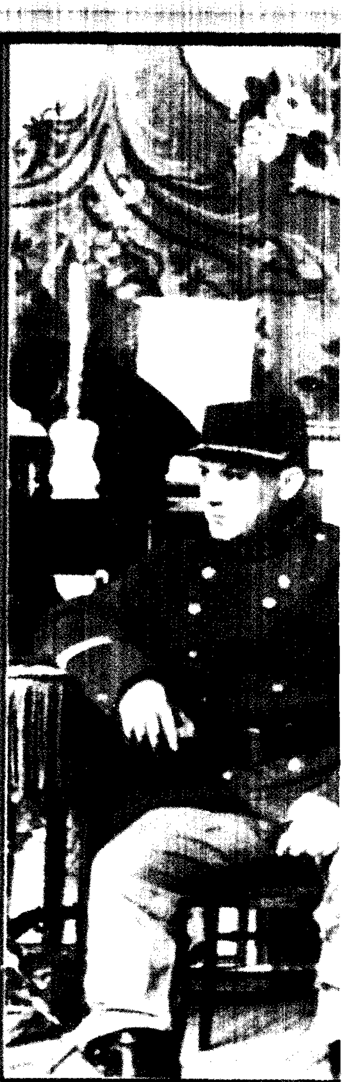


Braque in Picasso's studio in Paris, c. 1911



Picasso wearing Braque's uniform, c. 1911

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eries in cosmology and quantum physics, the reconciliation of science and religion sometimes now seems near at hand. It is a reconciliation not unlike the one we seek between humankind and nature. But even without defining the problem in religious terms, it is possible to conclude that the solutions we seek will be found in a new faith in the future of life on Earth after our own, a faith in the future that justifies sacrifices in the present, a new moral courage to choose higher values in the conduct of human affairs, and a new reverence for absolute principles that can serve as stars by which to map the future course of our species and our place within creation.

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

THE BY-THE-NUMBERS PRESIDENCY

By Fred Barnes

At his press conference on October 14, President Bush gave an answer that captured the flavor of his leadership better than anything he'd said in nine months in the White House. He was asked about the rollback by Congress of catastrophic health insurance for the elderly. This is not a peripheral issue, since it marks the first time a social entitlement program has been massively downscaled or repealed. His administration had initially opposed any rollback, but congressional Republicans pressured Bush into abandoning that position. Instead, he took no position at all.

How much should the program be slashed, and what, if anything, should be offered as an alternative? Bush was non-committal, and he wasn't sheepish or self-conscious about it. "We've got very able congressional leaders who don't agree on this," he said. "And it isn't all that clear what ought to be done on it. And so we are letting the congressional process hash this out. And if there is something that's unsatisfactory to us, I have no hesitancy to step in there."

Of course, hesitancy is exactly what Bush has lots of. He's the most hesitant President in decades, maybe since Calvin Coolidge. But he's hesitant for a reason, or two reasons. One, Bush is innately cautious. And two, if he acts, he may screw up, and there will be hell to pay. He'll plummet in public opinion polls, something that isn't taken lightly at the White House. Better to do nothing than to step forward boldly when there's a chance of making a mistake. On catastrophic health care, there was a chance. If he balked at slashing the program, he might arouse the geezers whose premiums had risen. If he didn't, beneficiaries might be mad. George Will says "a wetted finger held up to the breezes" is the symbol of the Bush administration. The dilemma on catastrophic insurance was that the breeze wasn't blowing in any one direction. Bush was paralyzed.

The calculation at the White House, or maybe it's just intuition, is that sins of commission are far more damaging to a President than sins of omission. If the President blunders, he'll sink like a stone. But if he simply does nothing, he'll fall only a little in polls, or perhaps not fall at all. So Bush's policy is: when in doubt, do nothing, because the odds are better.

Notice what's being protected here—Bush's popularity as measured in public opinion polls. Polls, not tangible achievements, are how Bush and his aides measure their success. (The one exception is John Sununu, the White House chief of staff and former Governor of New Hampshire, who thinks polls are fickle and cyclical.) The Bushies have turned upside down the old notion of success leading to popularity. They believe that Bush is doing well because he's popular. Democrats, the media, and various special interests are leery of crossing Bush so long as his poll numbers are high. Should he drop in the polls, though, he's vulnerable. He'll be zinged mercilessly by the press, bullied by Congress, and treated disrespectfully by the political community. To avert this, Bush's popularity must be protected at all costs. Without it, he's a punching bag.

Bush hardly deserves praise for his ultracaution. But I think it's understandable that he's taken this approach. The experience of Presidents over the last two decades or so has shown that assertiveness leads to disaster and disgrace. Remember what Bush has seen in Washington since he entered the House of Representatives in 1966. By then, Lyndon Johnson was well on his way to flaming out over his insistence on fighting in Vietnam, a war Bush supported. Richard Nixon came next. He touched off a fire storm by incautiously sending American troops into Cambodia to wipe out an enemy sanctuary. If Nixon had acquiesced to public opinion and Congress and gotten out of Vietnam early in his first term, his popularity might have soared. There would have been no paranoia, no Watergate, etc. Well, this is arguable at any rate.

Gerald Ford, too, hurt himself (but spared the nation a lingering ordeal) by pardoning Nixon a month after

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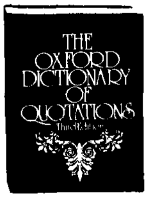
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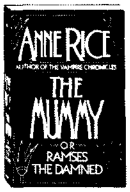
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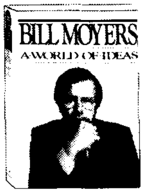
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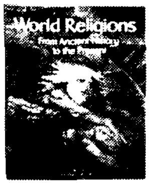
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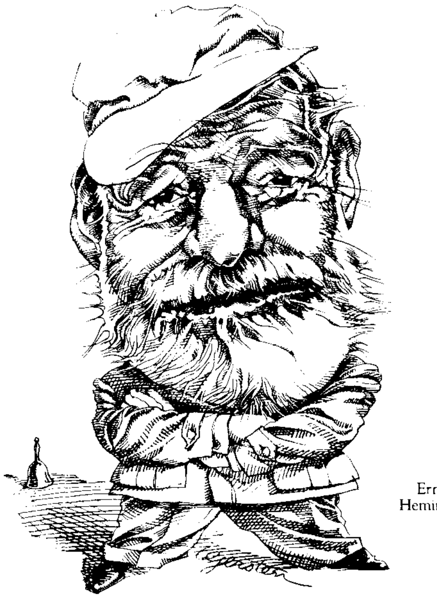
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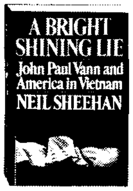
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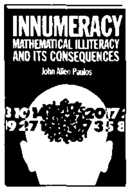
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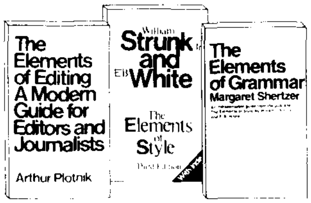
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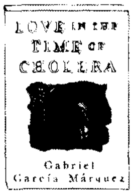
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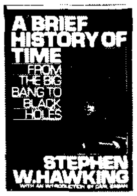
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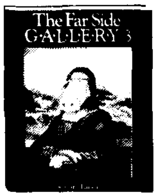
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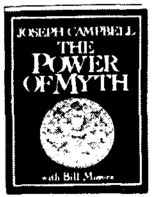
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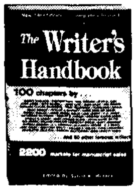
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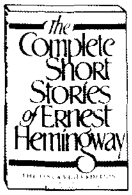
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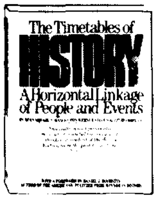
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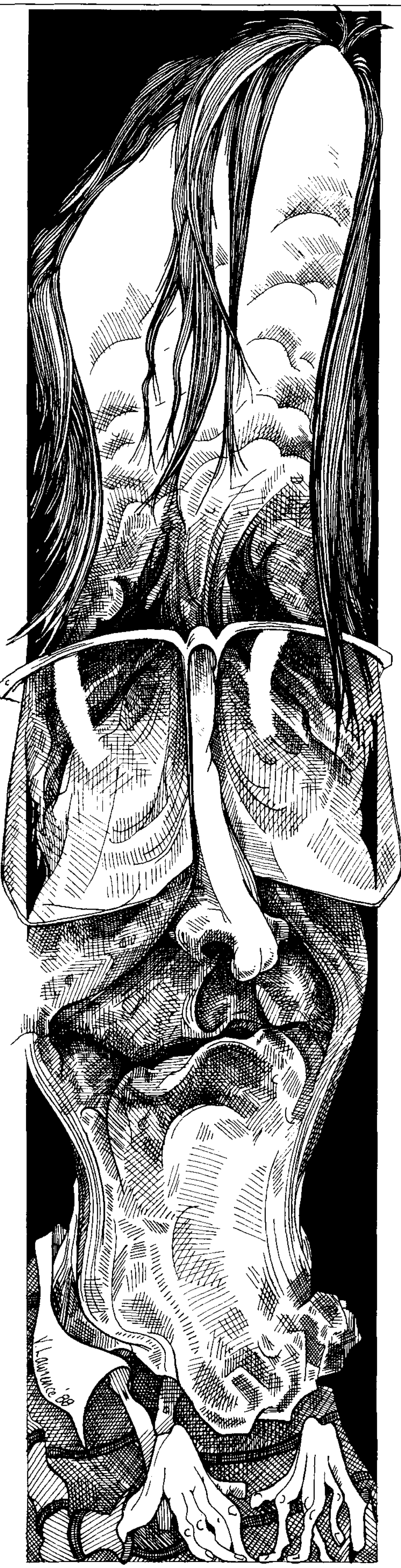
replacing him as President. Ford's popularity vanished overnight, and he never recovered politically. Jimmy Carter ardently sought détente with the Soviet Union, only to have this blow up in his face when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. He bravely allowed the Shah of Iran to come to the United States for medical care. The result was the seizure of American hostages at the embassy in Tehran. At one point, Carter's popularity fell lower than Nixon's in the depths of Watergate. He became the butt of jokes and lost his bid for re-election.

Ronald Reagan was a special case, a political immortal. He could get away with mistakes that normal politicians, like Bush, couldn't: 250 Marines killed in Lebanon, arms for hostages, the President's schedule under the influence of an astrologer. Still, though Reagan left the White House with his popularity intact, he lost favor for a time. During the Iran-*contra* flap, he had a serious brush with possible resignation or impeachment. Bush, as veep, was in a position to see exactly what had led Reagan into trouble, namely his desire to do something, anything, to free American hostages in Lebanon, and his passionate support for the Nicaraguan *contras*. Reagan lacked a cautious streak.

I think that Bush's approach to the presidency was shaped by the experience of Johnson, Nixon, Carter, Ford, and Reagan. Bush is bent on sidestepping whatever brought them grief. In general, this means not going against the grain of public opinion. It also means some specific things, such as a deep wariness of committing American troops anywhere. His hesitance on military intervention is reinforced by the caution of Defense Secretary Richard Cheney and Brent Scowcroft, the national security adviser, which grew out of their days in the Ford White House. They were traumatized by the *Mayaguez* affair in 1975, in which Cambodia seized an American ship and crew. Ford sent in the Marines, who hit the beach 30 minutes after the *Mayaguez* crew had been freed. The bodies of dead Marines had to be left behind. The final tally was more Marines killed than crewmen saved.



Given all this, Bush's response to the confusing coup attempt in Panama on October 3 was not surprising. He and his senior advisers were never likely to commit American troops. It wasn't because they didn't follow the right procedure and, say, convene in the situation room in the basement of the White House. Procedure had nothing to do with it. Bush's policy of extreme caution prevailed. True, he publicly urged Panamanian officers to stage a coup against Gen. Manuel Noriega. Bush wanted a successful coup, not just an attempt that depended on American intervention. He had no plans for sending Americans to aid the coup or snatch Noriega. He wanted Panamanians to overthrow Noriega, then hand him over for extradition to the United States. At his press conference on October 13, Bush said he hadn't learned anything from reports on the coup that "would make me have done something different in terms of use of force." He wasn't saying that to excuse his failure to act. He believes it.

Moments later, at the session with reporters, Bush was asked if he'd veto a bill providing federal funding for abortions in instances of rape or incest. "I'm not looking for any conflict over this," he said. Truer words were never spoken. Bush has opposed such funding (after once favoring it), but he doesn't want to fight with anyone over it. He'd rather split the difference, if possible. My guess is that Bush has concluded from the presidencies he's seen that conflict—with Congress, among administration officials, with ideological critics, with the press—erodes popularity. It's counterproductive, and thus to be avoided. The press treats all conflicts as bad. Reagan survived conflict after conflict. But Reagan had a special bond with the public. Bush doesn't.

Bush leans over backward to stifle conflicts. After Senator David Boren, chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, was contradicted by Scowcroft on an October 8 TV

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talk show, Bush summoned Boren to the White House to smooth things over. What Scowcroft had said—that the Intelligence Committee had effectively blocked covert operations involving Panama—was true. But Bush was willing to act as if it weren't, to pretend that Boren was the injured party. The White House issued a statement lauding Boren's "leadership on behalf of bipartisanship in foreign policy and his support of necessary presidential authorities in foreign policy matters."

Bush fought with Democratic leaders of Congress on reducing the tax on capital gains, but only as a last resort. For months he and Richard Darman, his budget chief, sought a compromise with House Speaker Thomas Foley and Representative Dan Rostenkowski, the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. When this effort failed, Bush was forced to join with Republicans and renegade Democrats to get a capital gains cut through the House. Even victorious conflict with Democratic leaders made the White House anxious. It jeopardizes Bush's quest for bipartisanship. Cynics may scoff, but I believe Bush is absolutely sincere in his talk about bipartisan policymaking. He figures that it's best for him—and his popularity.

Bush has gone to lengths to avoid every flaw of Carter and Reagan that was a drag on their popularity. Carter was a square peg in a round hole in Washington. He had little rapport with members of Congress or anyone else in Washington. Bush treats all Washington like a chum. Practically every Democrat has been invited to the White House for schmoozing. Reporters complained noisily about their limited access to Reagan. Bush has overcompensated, holding 24 formal press conferences and eight informal ones in nine months. He also jogs with reporters and invites some to dinner. This has touched off a new debate in the press over whether reporters should spurn Bush's charm offensive because it might soften their reporting.

The Bush formula of happy talk and timidity works. Bush has succeeded beyond his wildest dreams. His popularity reached 76 percent in October in a nationwide poll conducted by ABC News and the *Washington Post*. In other words, roughly three-fourths of the adults in the country think Bush is doing a good job as President. That's higher than Reagan ever got. And Reagan was as fixated on his personal popularity as Bush is. When his numbers tumbled during Iranamok, Reagan whined to a Republican Senator that he didn't have fans anymore. He grew despondent to the point of inactivity.

That won't happen to Bush. The conventional wisdom in Washington after the abortive Panama coup was that the Bush bubble had burst. I doubt it. Bush has discovered a political fact of life that's true for periods of peace and prosperity and maybe for worse times as well. Presidents usually don't get in trouble for what they don't do. (OK, Herbert Hoover did, but that was 60 years ago.) The adage about nothing ventured, nothing gained doesn't always apply to the White House. If a President craves popularity and re-election—and isn't concerned with making history—he can help himself by doing very little. I find it unattractive for a President to be obsessed with polls and popularity. Bush has an excuse. Everybody else in politics has the same obsession.

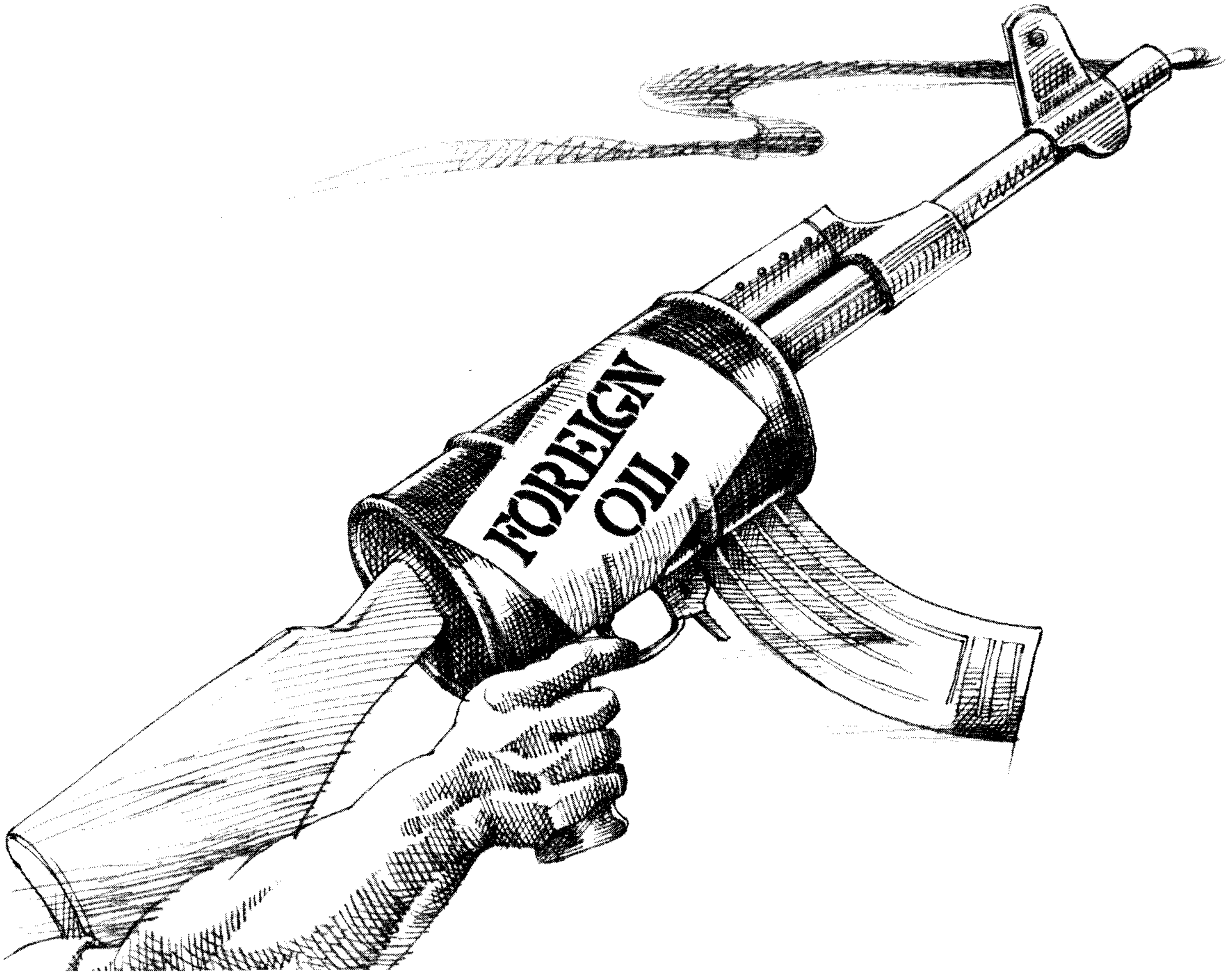
From segregation to 'hypersegregation.'

THE CRISIS OF CASTE

By C. Vann Woodward

Outbursts of racial tension or violence in America usually coincide with disparagement of past efforts to improve relations and predictions of worse things to come. It might help to place recent outbursts in perspective by recalling some past experiences. On August 11, 1965, just five days after the civil rights movement had reached its peak with the signing of the Voting Rights Act, a riot broke out in the Watts section of Los Angeles. It raged for a week, left 34 dead (all but three of them blacks), injured more than a thousand, and required military occupation of 46 square miles to halt the violence. Watts was followed by 150 major riots and hundreds of minor ones that summer and the next three summers. Cities were aflame all over the country. The worst of the riots and the bloodiest of the century occurred in Detroit in July 1967. Forty-three were killed, 14 square miles of the city were gutted by fire, and 15,000 troops were brought in to bring the riot to a halt.

C. VANN WOODWARD, a contributing editor, is the author most recently of *The Future of the Past* (Oxford University Press).



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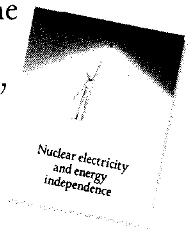

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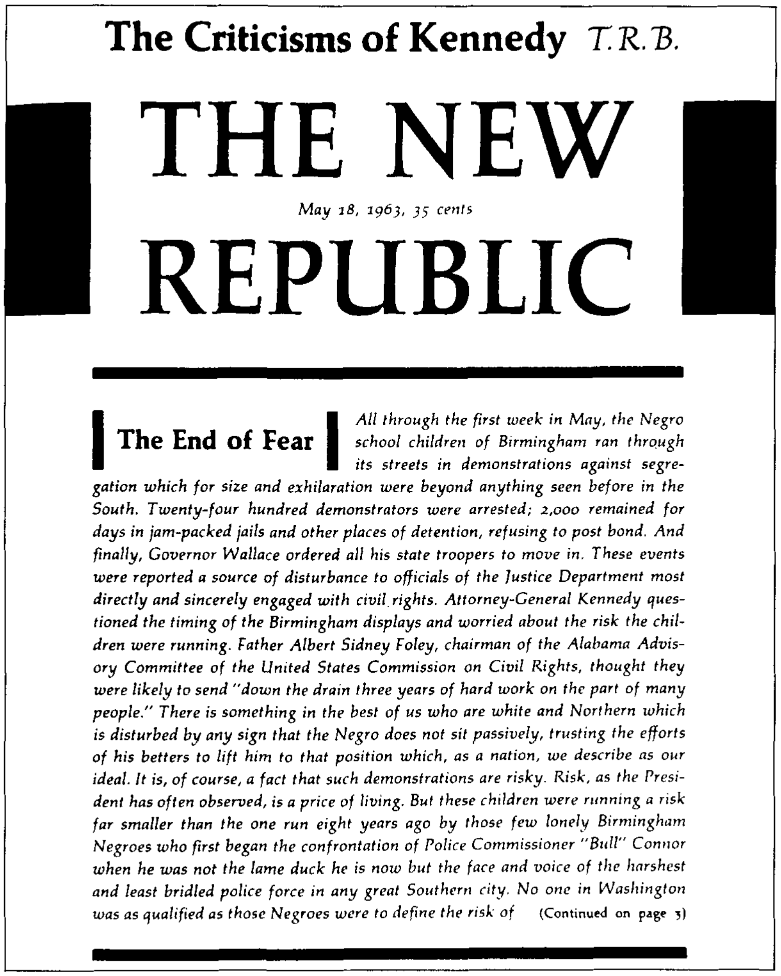
Historical analogies can be as misleading as helpful, but some are unavoidable. Comparisons between the 1860s and the 1960s in the history of American race relations have proved all but irresistible when the civil rights movement comes under discussion. The two peaks of progress that face each other across the century challenge comparison, as do the shadows that they cast before them. By calling the civil rights movement "The Second Reconstruction," in an article for *Harper's* in April 1965, I should say that I intended the comparison as a warning rather than a prediction. It was to suggest that if the soaring promises and expectations of 1965 were followed by the complacency, neglect, and betrayal that prevailed after the promises of 1865, we might face once more the failure and reaction that disgraced the First Reconstruction. Although it is impossible to believe that the analogy will hold up to the extent of predicting for the 1990s the horrors of the 1890s that wiped out the gains of the First Reconstruction, it must be admitted that there are some signs pointing that way.



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The End of Fear

All through the first week in May, the Negro school children of Birmingham ran through its streets in demonstrations against segregation which for size and exhilaration were beyond anything seen before in the South. Twenty-four hundred demonstrators were arrested; 2,000 remained for days in jam-packed jails and other places of detention, refusing to post bond. And finally, Governor Wallace ordered all his state troopers to move in. These events were reported a source of disturbance to officials of the Justice Department most directly and sincerely engaged with civil rights. Attorney-General Kennedy questioned the timing of the Birmingham displays and worried about the risk the children were running. Father Albert Sidney Foley, chairman of the Alabama Advisory Committee of the United States Commission on Civil Rights, thought they were likely to send "down the drain three years of hard work on the part of many people." There is something in the best of us who are white and Northern which is disturbed by any sign that the Negro does not sit passively, trusting the efforts of his betters to lift him to that position which, as a nation, we describe as our ideal. It is, of course, a fact that such demonstrations are risky. Risk, as the President has often observed, is a price of living. But these children were running a risk far smaller than the one run eight years ago by those few lonely Birmingham Negroes who first began the confrontation of Police Commissioner "Bull" Connor when he was not the lame duck he is now but the face and voice of the harshest and least bridled police force in any great Southern city. No one in Washington was as qualified as those Negroes were to define the risk of

(Continued on page 3)

COVER, MAY 18, 1963

Before turning to them, however, it is important to give full acknowledgment to such progress as has been made. One way of summing that up is by quoting Chief Justice Earl Warren's description of the situation of black people in the South and in some measure in other parts of the country during the early 1950s:

> They could not live where they desired, they could not work where white people worked, except in menial positions. . . . They could not use the same rest rooms, drinking fountains, or telephone booths. They could not eat in the same restaurants, sleep in the same hotels, be treated in the same hospitals. . . . They could not attend the same public schools. . . . They were denied admission to any university attended by whites, whether public or private.
>
> They were denied the right to sit on juries even when their own lives, freedom, or property were involved. . . .
>
> They were segregated on buses, street cars, trains, ships, and airplanes and terminals of all kinds. They were not allowed to vote.

Granted that the wrongs are slow to be redressed and the rights have yet to be fully restored, the mere enumeration of wrongs to be righted should curb hasty dismissal of past achievements in the struggle against the Jim Crow system. Granted too that the gains black people have made during the last 30 or 40 years in schooling, in earnings, in the military services, in the occupations and the professions, in elective and appointive offices and in politics generally, have been limited and remain far lower than the levels whites have long enjoyed, they are nevertheless of undeniable importance. The same is true, both as to the progress and its limits, of advances in the harmony of relations between races at some levels. No amount of cynicism should be permitted to dismiss these gains. Having registered and underscored those concessions, we are on firmer ground in assessing recent evidence of a contrary sort, evidence of stagnation and retrogression in many areas, some of which had earlier seen years of gratifying progress.

If Gunnar Myrdal's *American Dilemma* (1944) and the Kerner Report (1968) were landmarks in the history of the Second Reconstruction, a new book titled *A Common Destiny: Blacks in American Society* (1989) may earn comparable status in time. The work of a committee of social scientists, it lacks the readability of its predecessors and will not likely have the public attention they received, but its findings are not to be overlooked. Throughout its pages, reluctantly recorded, run negative and pessimistic themes. Several of these are caught in the following passage:

> Since the mid-1970s, many signs of stagnation or even retrogression have appeared in some important measures of income, health, education, and conditions of black community and family life: increased poverty, a decrease in college enrollment of blacks, an increased proportion of households headed by poor single women, and continuing high unemployment of both men and women. After a decade and a half of devoting great attention but little pragmatic action to these conditions, they have reached a critical stage.

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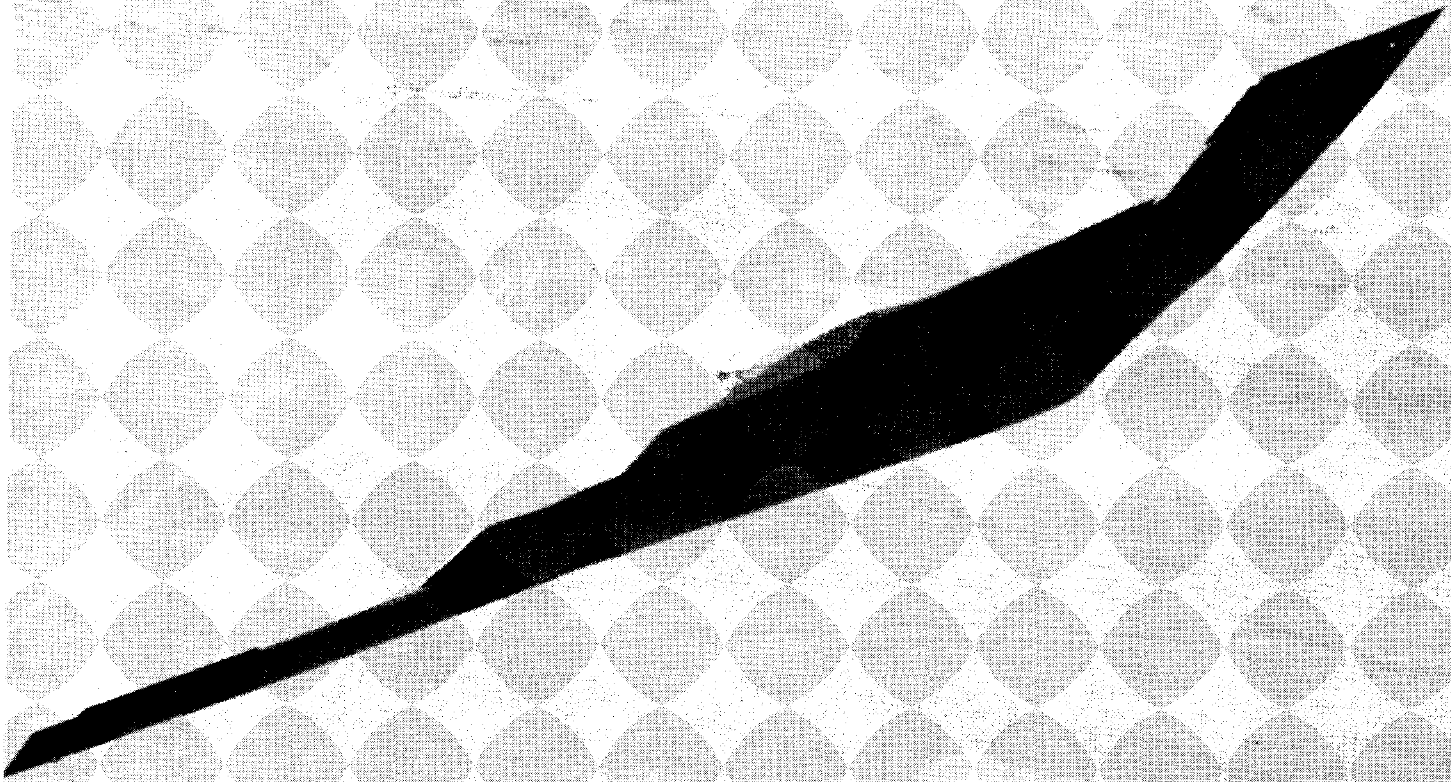

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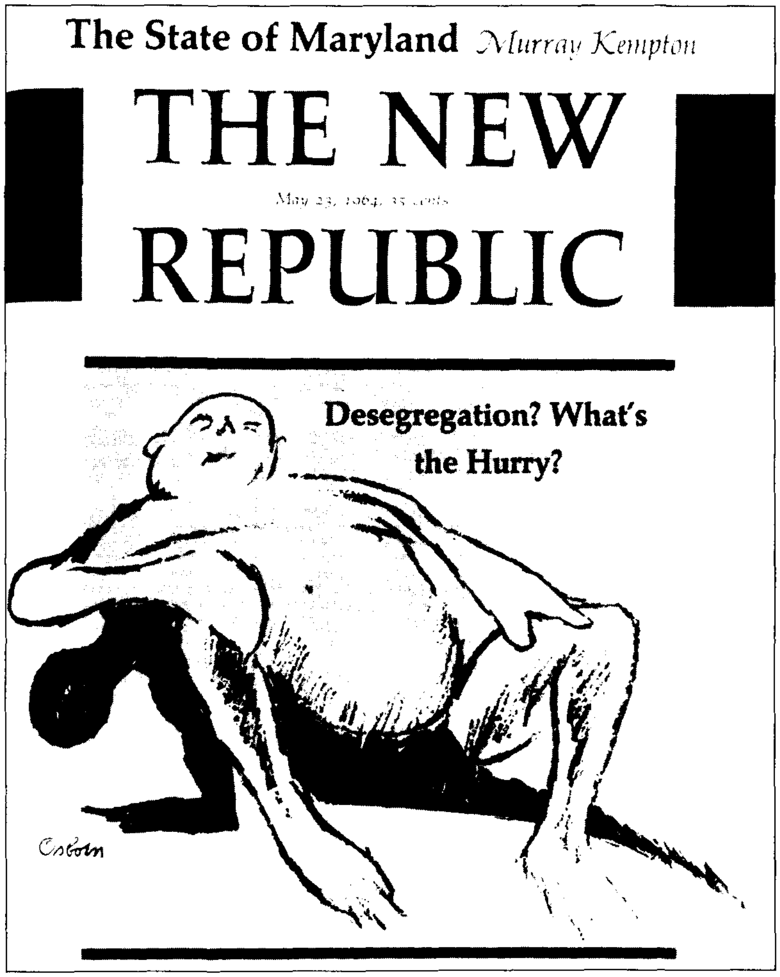
The decline of recent years in many of the areas mentioned here—health, income, schooling—has often been preceded by a period of striking improvement that has been suddenly halted or reversed. And improvement at the upper end of the economic scale has been accompanied by decline at the lower end, where the great majority of the black population is located. This polarizing tendency is illustrated by changes in family income. While black families with incomes over $50,000 grew from 4.7 percent in 1970 to 8.8 percent in 1986 (when 22 percent of white families were in that category), black families with incomes of less than $10,000 grew from 26.8 to 30.2 percent. And while annual earnings of black male college graduates rose six percent, blacks with high school degrees fell five percent further behind.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May 23, 1964, 35 cents
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COVER, MAY 23, 1964

In education black students made substantial progress in several ways up to the early or mid-1970s, but since then they have stalled or declined. In higher education the percentage of undergraduate, graduate, and faculty blacks has declined generally. The rate of black high school graduates attending college rose rapidly to 48 percent in 1977, only to fall to 36.5 percent in 1986. Slippage and declines in status and rating in economic, health, and other categories in addition to education follow upon years of remarkable advance.

There appears to be no plausible reason to doubt a considerable increase among whites in acceptance of the right of blacks to equal opportunity, but endorsement of principle is often accompanied by rejection of measures designed to achieve the principle. Large-scale desegregation of schools occurred in the South in the 1960s and 1970s, but the pace has slowed, and the amount of racial separation remains high outside the South. Even within desegregated schools means are often found to keep black and white students separated. Access to housing has increased for blacks in some parts of the country, but residential segregation in metropolitan areas remains about as high as it was in the 1960s. Black participation has appreciably increased in sports, entertainment, arts, and public schools, but apart from the Army, this has not meant true integration or the elimination of racial separation in American life. The prospects for achieving those goals appear remote, and there seems to be no reasonable hope in the foreseeable future for colorblind assimilation.

To speak of racial averages among blacks in the last decade or more is to speak in terms of slippage, stagnation, or retrogression. That is discouraging enough, but those terms prove wholly inadequate when we turn to what is happening in the urban ghetto and the inner-city population. On that subject a vocabulary of crisis is required. Demographers have coined the term "hypersegregation" to describe the phenomenon. This is race relations without any relations between races—almost total segregation. It was rapid urbanization of blacks in smaller numbers that brought on the Jim Crow system in the South in the first place. More extensive in the North than in the South at first, Jim Crow began to be enforced and rigidly regimented by law in the South in the 1880s. These laws continued to be elaborated in the decades following. But that was a century or more ago, and laws to enforce the system have long since been declared unconstitutional. Now we are told in a disturbing recent study that "racial segregation in this country is deeper and more profound than previous attempts to study it had indicated."

This study represents an exhaustive investigation of 22,000 neighborhoods, in 60 cities, including ten large Northern metropolitan areas that contain 29 percent of the urban black population of the country. The work was directed by Douglas S. Massey and Nancy A. Denton of the University of Chicago and published in the August 1989 issue of *Demography*. Hypersegregation not only accentuates the level of segregation for blacks greatly in any dimension but markedly increases the number of ways and areas to which segregation extends. Black patterns of fertility, marriage, and family

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have diverged more sharply from the mainstream in the last decade, while poverty and unemployment are increasingly concentrated in the black inner city. Even "black ghetto speech has grown progressively more distinct from the standard English" of whites. The result is a vicious circle in which the longer blacks are made victims of the white stereotypes that foster hypersegregation, the more they appear to conform to the stereotypes that were used to justify segregation in the first place, and the deeper victims sink in isolation.

The plight of the hypersegregated cannot be understood, of course, without taking into account the environment in which they are trapped. That includes the disintegrating families and the multiplication of female-headed households, fatherless children, child mothers, and homeless people. They live in streets brutalized by crime amid people crazed by drugs. They live in communities deserted by the strong, the able, and the resourceful members who were liberated by the success of the civil rights movement they once led, and promptly got out. Among these were some individuals with political talents who have become mayors of increasing numbers of our largest cities. This is not to blame them for what happened in the inner cities, but the coincidence of their rise and the increase of hypersegregation does illustrate the paradox of the civil rights movement. The unliberated at the same time find less and less concern for their plight in the higher courts, in the federal administration, and in a country where racial segregation is regaining wide acceptance and resistance to it increasingly seems not worth the trouble, even among its victims.

The terms "class" and "underclass" are constantly used in reference to blacks in the more hopeless ranks. Yet the condition of these people is not adequately defined by the socioeconomic determinants of class, such as unemployment and poverty. Hispanic Americans are often lumped with Afro-Americans, and among the lower ranks they do have many class characteristics in common with blacks. But the study of hypersegregation made extensive comparisons of blacks and Hispanics and found marked differences in the degree and the multiplicity of ways in which blacks were penalized and excluded. "Blacks are thus unique in experiencing multidimensional hypersegregation," Massey and Denton point out. Slow and reluctant to admit the existence of class distinctions in their democracy, Americans are now faced with entrenched realities of caste distinctions.

The analogy between the outcome of the first Reconstruction and the second, between what followed in the 1890s and may follow in the 1990s, remains what it was when it was first made in April 1965, a warning rather than a prediction. But in the intervening quarter century, the warning signals have kept multiplying.

International law? It's purely advisory.

THE CURSE OF LEGALISM

By Charles Krauthammer

> "The choice that confronts the diplomat is not between legality and illegality, but between political wisdom and political folly." —Hans Morgenthau

The prohibition against the use of poison gas is not a run-of-the-mill international regulation. It is one of the most hallowed norms of the international system. Yet last year, when Iraq committed the most atrocious crime of the decade, murdering thousands of its own Kurds with poison gas, the world yawned. Oh yes, an international conference was called. It did not punish Iraq. It did not condemn Iraq. It did not mention Iraq. It welcomed Iraq, still stinking of gas, as an honored participant.

The casualness with which the sacred injunction against chemical war was disregarded shows how fictional is the whole notion of an ordered international system regulated by international law. What can law mean in an international system so conspicuously unable and unwilling to control lawlessness? Americans don't like to face the question. As Hans Morgenthau observed 40 years ago, Americans have a propensity to see the international arena as a court of law, an ordered world regulated by word and contract. The resulting American foreign policy, he noted, was informed less by national interest than by the dictates of a particularly disabling diplomatic disease: legalism.

Legalism starts with a naive belief in the efficacy of law as a regulator of international conduct. But it does not stop there. Legalism means operating abroad by an international rule book, acting on the basis of writ-

CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER, a contributing editor, is a syndicated columnist.

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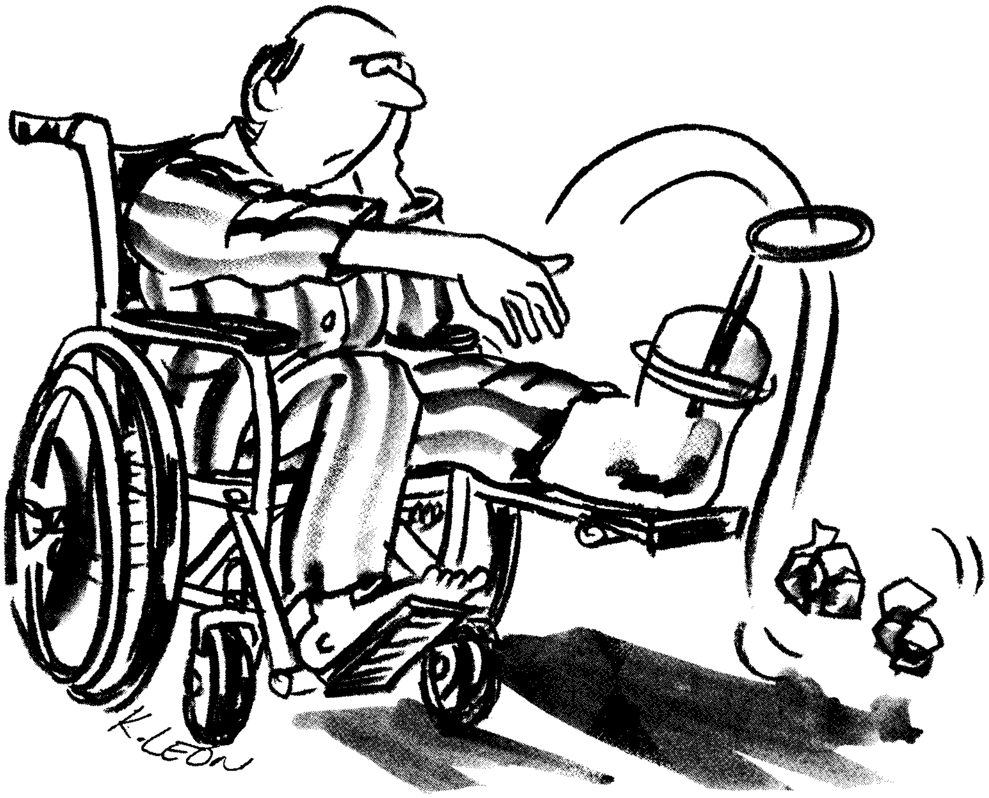

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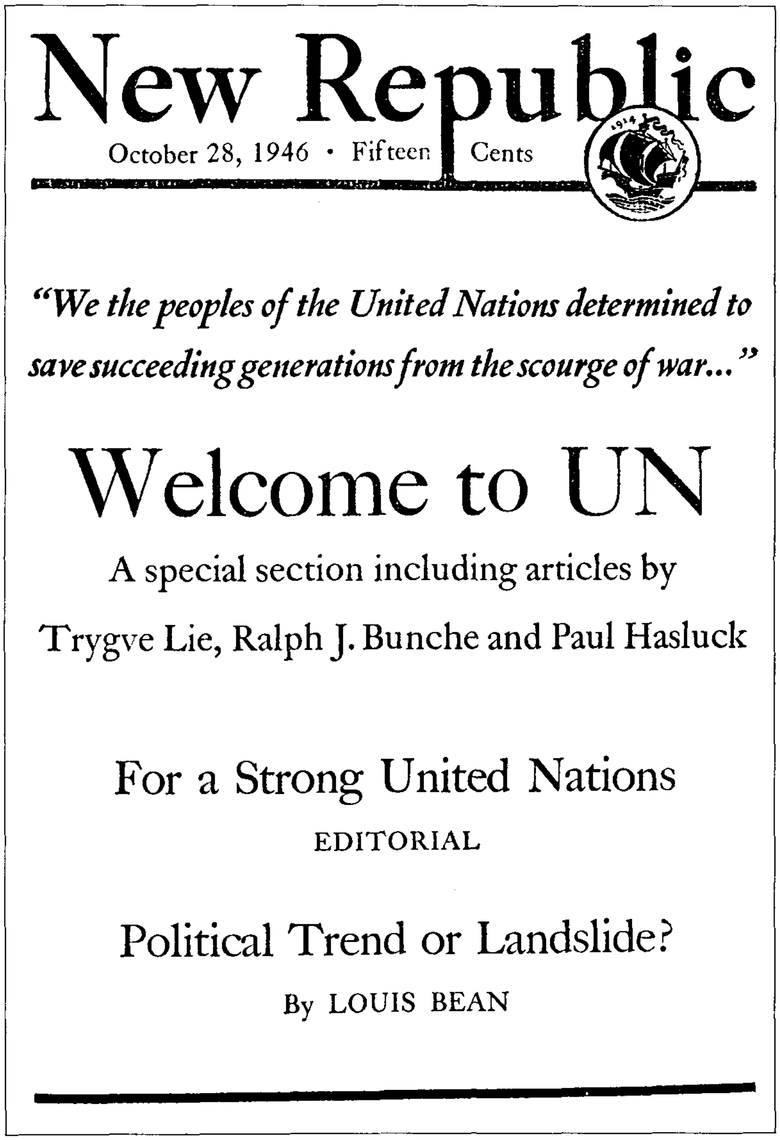
an international rule book, acting on the basis of written and verbal promises, trusting to paper international institutions (like the Organization of American States) to put things right. Legalism is a kind of diplomatic literalness, and, like all forms of literalness, it lacks imagination. Because it cannot imagine the infinite capacity of nation-states for duplicity, mendacity, and malice—in short, for lawlessness—it is not only naive but dangerous.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EDITORIAL

Political Trend or Landslide?

By LOUIS BEAN

COVER, OCTOBER 28, 1946

America tends to see the international arena as domestic life writ large. The fundamental difference between domestic and international life, of course, is that in the international arena the legal structure is not agreed upon and there is no enforcement mechanism. States are free to ignore the law. If the leader of Iran decides, say, to contract for the killing of a British writer (payment: a ticket to heaven and change), what is to stop him?

Legalism is international relations for lawyers. But the international arena is not a court. It is more a state of nature. That is how the world looks from Kurdistan, Afghanistan, and the other convulsed -stans of this world. That is not how it looks from Washington.

Consider, for example, the recent attempted coup in Panama. In the midst of the fighting, the U.S. Embassy in Panama City cabled Washington that the rebels were holding Gen. Manuel Noriega and wanted to turn him over to the United States. (It turned out that the message was garbled. They had, in fact, said "won't," not "want," but the State Department was unaware of the error and proceeded accordingly.) The *New York Times* describes what happened next: "That fact was reported to the State Department and Central Intelligence Agency simultaneously, prompting the State Department to call a hurried meeting with government lawyers to consider such a step. Minutes later, the coup collapsed."

The bullets are flying. A score of lives hang in the balance. Panama's future is about to be decided. And the State Department calls together its lawyers. Only in America.

Nor was it only the State Department that in the fog of war kept a clear eye on the law. The United States had been asked by the coup's plotters to block two roads to prevent Noriega's reinforcements from reaching army headquarters. Noriega then flew his men to an airport on the other side of town and brought them in by a third route. These reinforcements turned the tide and saved him. What did the United States do? It did comply with the first request to block the two roads, because, American officials subsequently explained, these roadblocks could be justified as permitted under existing treaty arrangements with Panama. Blocking the third approach would take American forces off their bases and would clearly be "illegal." What could be disguised as a legal maneuver was undertaken. What could not was not, despite the fact that it would probably have tipped the balance of forces and toppled Noriega.

What should President Bush have done? Do what Lyndon Johnson did in Santo Domingo and Ronald Reagan did in Grenada. Go in, do what you have to do, and *then* call in the lawyers to find some retroactive legal justification for what you've done.

American policy in Panama did not, however, suffer a sudden attack of legalism during the failed October coup. It has been so afflicted from the beginning. The entire policy of devoting enormous American energy and attention to overthrowing Noriega stemmed from his indictment in an American court on drug-running

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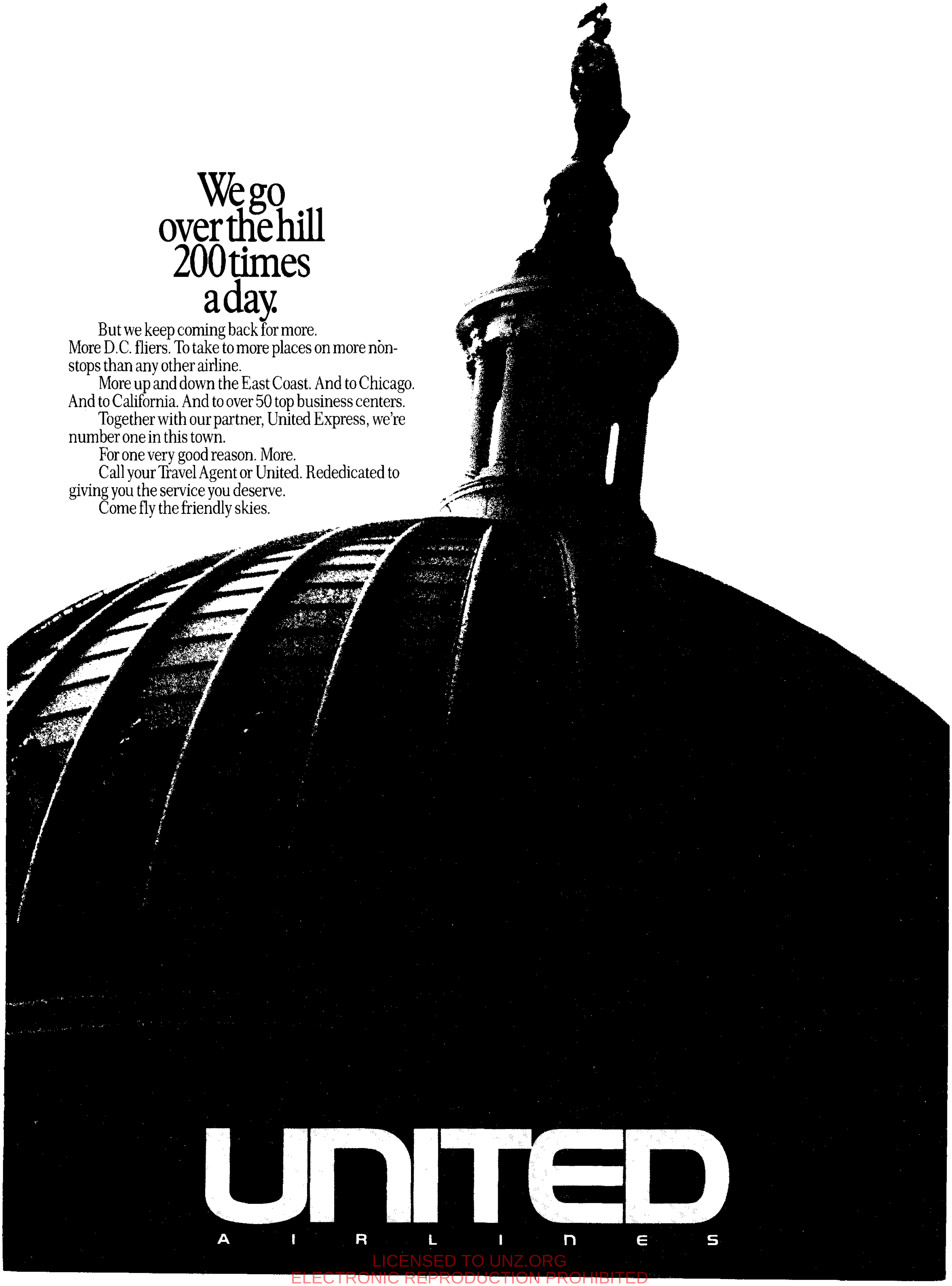

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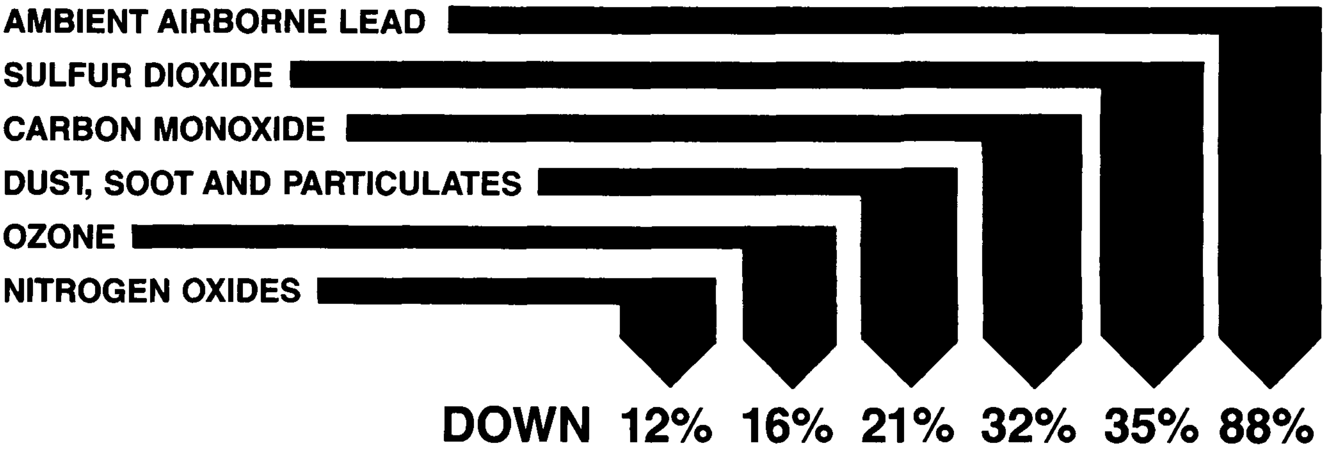

More needs to be done. We must continue to develop efficient pollution control technologies. We must provide an adequate planning period so that we know the effect compliance will have on consumer prices, jobs and the environment. Before we enact costly legislation, we must determine whether such action will be effective and compatible with other environmental goals.

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charges. That step set up a train of political events that elevated Noriega, who by any dispassionate consideration of American national interests is no more than a minor irritant, to No. 1 threat to American interests in the region. Once the legal process had been started, once Noriega had been branded in the national consciousness as an indicted felon, the politicians found it impossible to resist the home-front clamor to pursue justice even across borders. For two years now Panama policy has become little more than a vehicle for law enforcement.

Panama is not an isolated case. In American foreign policy debate, the appeal to notions of legality and illegality have become habitual. During the decade-long debate on Nicaragua policy, one side could hardly pronounce the word "*contra*" without appending "illegal *contra* war," as if in this context the word "illegal" meant something. What was meant, of course, was that the Rio Treaty and the OAS charter prohibited interference in the affairs of neighbor states and therefore U.S. support for the *contras* was prima facie wrong.

In the first place, interfering in the affairs of other states is the whole purpose of foreign policy. In the second place, the particular state with which the United States was interfering, namely Nicaragua, was quite open in proclaiming its right, in fact its internationalist duty, to interfere in its neighboring state of El Salvador to assist the rebels trying to overthrow the government. For years, in fact, the Salvadoran guerrillas made Managua their headquarters. What is the operational meaning and the consequence of Managua's "illegal" interference? None. Scruples about "illegal" interference are a particularly North American phenomenon.

In the third place, illegal according to whom? The OAS? The OAS is not a juridical body. It is a political body, a place where countries go to advance their interests. These are not necessarily U.S. interests. As Irving Kristol once observed, the OAS is "a kind of mini-United Nations where we can be voted down in only three languages, thereby saving translators' fees." The World Court? A frequent and potent liberal refrain in the American debate on Nicaragua was the "illegal mining of Nicaragua's harbors." Indeed, in 1986 Nicaragua "sued" the United States in the grandiloquently named International Court of Justice for mining its harbors. The United States lost the case and was ordered to pay reparations for violating international law, a weighty judgment that had a significant impact on U.S. public opinion.

But the World Court is not a court at all. It is a committee of 15 judges elected by the General Assembly, that center of planetary judiciousness, where the United States and the Seychelles have an equal vote and where the resulting permanent Third World-Soviet bloc majority routinely votes against the United States and finds it responsible for every manner of offense. The World Court blows with the political breezes, most of them noxious to the United States, that come off the East River. It does not follow binding precedent (as does the U. S. Supreme Court, for example). It can change its mind whenever the General Assembly changes its makeup. And it has no way to enforce its rulings.

The World Court thus manages the feat of being at the same time capricious and impotent. Not surprisingly, more than two-thirds of the countries of the world refuse to submit to its jurisdiction. When the Court is used—other than for propaganda—it is for the arbitration of cases so insignificant that it is not worth the time of diplomats to negotiate them. (The United States was recently involved in such a case with Italy. It concerned compensation for a U.S. factory nationalized in 1968.)

Another promiscuous use of the word "illegal" is in association with Namibia. South Africa's occupation of Namibia did deny its people independence. But since the occupation was not particularly barbaric, it is the moral equivalent of, if not more benign than, say, the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia or the Chinese occupation of Tibet. Yet the term "illegal" applied uniquely to Namibia. Why? Because the occupation was in defiance of a U.N. Security Council resolution. Why not Tibet and Czechoslovakia? (Czechoslovakia, goes the joke, is the world's most peaceful country: it does not even interfere in its own internal affairs.) Because China and Russia have a veto at the Security Council. No resolution ordering the end of these occupations and condemning them to illegality will ever pass the Security Council.

Yet because the notion of illegality attached to it, the occupation of Namibia acquired a special opprobrium. And that opprobrium had consequences. Many Americans argued that American policy in southern Africa ought to be single-mindedly aimed at ending the occupation of Namibia. "We must press forcefully for Namibia's independence by calling for the end of South Africa's illegal occupation," said the 1988 Democratic platform. No call for any quid pro quo from the other side. The Reagan Administration, on the other hand, demanded a deal: Cuban withdrawal from Angola in return for South African withdrawal from Namibia. When candidate Michael Dukakis was asked whether he would demand the same, he said no. Why not? Because one occupation was illegal and the other was not.

As if that settled the matter. In the end, the Reagan Administration ignored the distinction between "illegal" (South African) and "legal" (Cuban) occupations and produced a deal that will soon end both. As a result, Angola and Namibia and, not incidentally, the United States will be better off, a result that the legalists, if given the chance, would have prevented.

Perhaps the most egregious example of the legal mind at work in American foreign policy was the rhetorical minuet that late last year produced the first U.S.-PLO dialogue. It is not that the United States should refrain from trying to get the PLO, and all the Mideast parties for that matter, to moderate their positions. It is that the United States thought it was getting moderation when in fact it was getting only declarations.

Then-Secretary of State George Shultz established three rhetorical hurdles for Yasir Arafat to jump over. In Algiers, Stockholm, and his U.N. address in Geneva, Arafat did everything he could to avoid the hurdles. Shultz did not budge. After much exasperation and back-room coaching from the United States, Arafat was finally trotted out to a press conference where he read—once, and in English—words scripted for him in Washington and thus met the American requirements for dialogue.

But did he? The idea behind the 1975 Kissinger criteria was to change PLO behavior. Changing one's language is perhaps an element of changed behavior, but not all of it. At Geneva, Arafat renounced terrorism. So he said. Two weeks later the mayor of Bethlehem proposed a cease-fire in the *intifada*. Arafat then declared: "Whoever thinks of stopping the *intifada* before it achieves its goals, I will give him ten bullets in the chest." Mayor Freij is no collaborationist. He is a moderate. But he can take a hint. He withdrew his proposal.

As for recognition of Israel, Arafat said at Geneva that after the PLO is granted a seat at the international conference, and after a Palestinian state is established with its capital in Jerusalem, he would then be prepared to recognize the right of other nations in the area, including Israel, to live in peace. This is of course a far cry from saying, "I recognize Israel." Who knows what the world will look like at that point in history? The Camp David Accords are only ten years old and are routinely declared dead. Whether Arafat's one-time declaration of possible recognition of Israel in the far future (and after all his demands are met) will mean anything at all in that future is extremely problematic.

Nonetheless, the United States determined, and the world has repeated ever since, that Arafat has "recognized Israel." Fine. It's a stretch, but grant that Arafat did so that once. What has he done since? In Geneva, when asked minutes later whether his tortuous formulation really meant that he recognized Israel, Arafat answered, "Enough is enough." He refused to say. When asked exactly the same question a couple of weeks before in Stockholm, after another supposed recognition of Israel, he had replied, "I recognize peace." At the August 1989 meeting of Fatah, Arafat's own organization produced a "political program"—in Arabic—that so violently denounced the Zionist enemy that the State Department felt obliged to issue a rebuke. Accordingly, after the Fatah delegates had gone home, the Tunis office issued a cleaned-up version in English. They work every time, those magic words. Rather than face the reality of Fatah's true intentions as expressed in its virulent political program, the Administration chose to deal with Fatah's subsequent communiqué, edited for America. On that basis—words that openly belie intentions—the U.S.-PLO dialogue began. On that basis, it continues.

The larger issue is not the opening of the U.S.-PLO dialogue, but what the way that opening came about tells us about the operating assumptions of American foreign policy. Even granting that Arafat's one-time words met American rhetorical requirements, it is absurd for a great power, or any country for that matter, to allow its policy to be dictated by legalistic formulations. To allow the enunciation of certain words automatically to trigger a new American policy is to forfeit all judgment. And judgment is the soul of foreign policy.

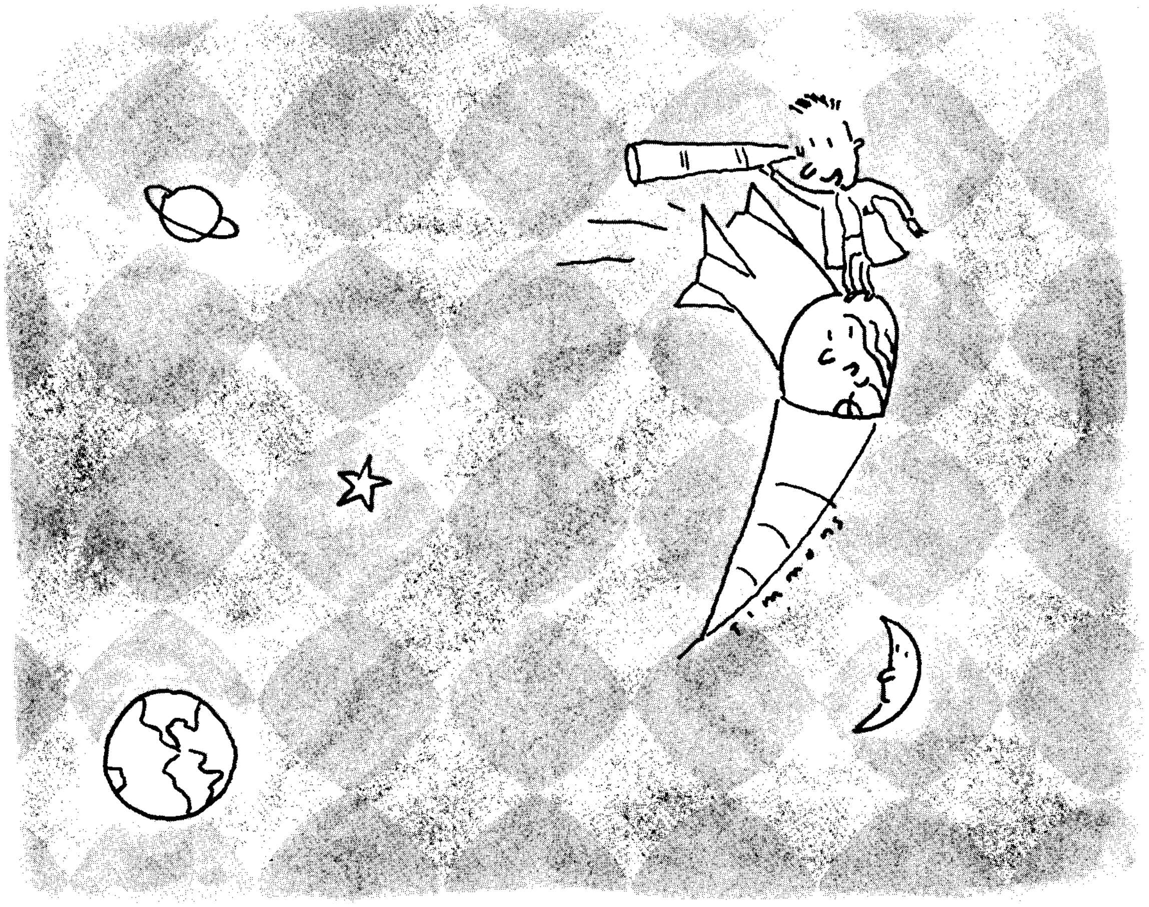
Allowing policy to be driven by legal formulas rather than by national purpose is the heart of legalism. This is not, however, to say that treaties are meaningless. Reciprocal agreements—treaties between allies or between countries that mutually agree to abide by agreements and can be trusted to do so—are in the interests of both parties. If the United States and Canada draw up a fishing agreement, they have every reason to be legalistic in carrying it out, since if both countries are scrupulous in carrying it out, both profit. But this situation simply does not obtain when dealing with countries for which law of any kind is a mere instrument, infinitely adaptable to the requirements of power.

Nor does a skepticism toward international law dictate an aggressive foreign policy. A healthy cynicism about the behavior of other countries can endow foreign policy with maturity. It keeps one from being scandalized and recklessly reactive when others fail one's legal tests. For example, the United States discovers that the Soviets have violated the ABM Treaty with their radar station in Krasnoyarsk. Many have argued that this is grounds for abrogation of the treaty: the contract, having been violated by one party, should be declared void. But international relations is not contract law. And treaties are not retained simply because their provisions are fully observed or renounced simply because they are breached. One has to make a larger judgment. Is it in America's interest to retain a treaty that restricts the Soviets, even if not as much as the treaty requires? That is a policy judgment to which a reading of treaty text, no matter how close, contributes nothing.

Turning foreign policy over to the lawyers is the laziest, the most brainless way to make policy. Yet two years ago a great national debate about how and whether to proceed with strategic defenses was turned into a Talmudic contest between Sam Nunn, Esq., and Judge Abraham Sofaer about the proper interpretation of the ABM Treaty and its attendant documents.

What about the future? How are we to think about, say, a chemical warfare plant in a crazy state like Libya? If it became a threat to the United States or other countries, would they be justified in pre-emptively destroying it? International law does not prohibit the possession of chemical weapons. It only prohibits use. There is no legal basis for destroying the plant. Only after it has been used, presumably for mass murder, would we be legally entitled to destroy it.

Now, using military force may be the best way to stop Libya from producing poison gas. The policy decision is difficult. But it is a policy decision, not a legal judgment. In this case, as in many of the tough ones, the law—international law—is an ass. It has nothing to offer. Foreign policy is best made without it. ●



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The prospects for Soviet disunion.

RUSSIA'S SHUDDERING EMPIRE

By Richard Pipes

Not long ago, Mikhail Gorbachev declared the nationality question to be the most urgent and dangerous one facing his government. It was a welcome departure from the traditional boasts of Soviet leaders that they have solved the ethnic and racial problems plaguing capitalist societies. Gorbachev has merely confirmed what some specialists on the Soviet Union have long known: that his country is seething with ethnic tensions and thwarted national aspirations.

The so-called "nationality question" in the Soviet Union is a euphemism for what is elsewhere known as imperialism and colonialism. Unlike the United States, whose multinational population consists overwhelmingly of descendants of immigrants who voluntarily left their native countries, the Soviet Union owes its ethnic diversity to conquest. It is the last empire in the world. While helping to "liberate" the subject peoples of foreign powers, it has insisted on maintaining intact its own colonial domain inherited from the czars.

The growth of the Russian Empire began in the mid-16th century with the defeat and annexation by Moscow of the Tatar principalities of Kazan and Astrakhan. The only country to have land connections with three strategic regions (Europe, the Middle East, and East Asia), Russia expanded relentlessly along its frontiers, destroying and annexing one nation after another. By 1900 Russians constituted only 44 percent of the empire's population. Today they are 52 percent, but their share is declining due to a low birthrate, and they may soon be a minority again.

Because their expansion occurred in neighboring areas rather than overseas, Russians were never conscious of building a colonial empire. They treated the conquered peoples as ethnic minorities whom they expected, sooner or later, to succumb to Russia's superior political and economic might and to assimilate. Liberal and socialist parties before 1917 paid scant attention to this issue. They were convinced that the aspirations of the non-Russian peoples would be fully satisfied by the country's inevitable democratization.

This was also Lenin's view. But eager to gain the support of ethnic groups in his drive for power, he promised each of them the right to full self-determination up to and including secession. He did not believe they would exercise this right, but if they should insist, he could always bring them back into the fold by exercising the superior right of "proletarian self-determination," by which he meant the interests of his party. In 1922-24 the Soviet Union was constructed as a pseudo-federation in which the major ethnic groups enjoy certain symbolic rights of statehood, but authority resides in the hands of a single Communist Party completely dominated by Russians. In the current Politburo all members are Russian but one—Eduard Shevardnadze, the foreign minister, who is a Georgian.

The expectation that the non-Russians would assimilate was cruelly disappointed. The spread of mass education, echoes of decolonization abroad, and resentment of Russian hegemony contributed to intensifying national sentiments. Without question, the Soviet minorities are more conscious of their identity and aspirations today than before the Revolution. As soon as Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost* permitted the expression of such sentiments, the smoldering ethnic tensions and frustrations rose to the surface. In all of the republics, there are now native "fronts" agitating for national rights.

What do these subject peoples want? The answer differs from region to region, and depends largely on a given group's cultural and economic level of development, as well as its relations with its neighbors. The desire for political independence is strongest in the three Baltic republics and Georgia. Elsewhere nationalism takes the form of demands for economic and linguistic autonomy and enhanced self-rule, especially in the allocation of economic resources. Among the Ukrainians, the secessionist movement seems most developed in the western region, taken from Poland in 1939, which has a large Uniate (Catholic) population. There is tension among the Turkic Kazakhs of Central Asia, who were decimated by Stalin's collectivization and forced to abandon their traditional nomadic way of life. It is difficult at this time to assess the level of

RICHARD PIPES is Baird Professor of History at Harvard University and the author of a forthcoming history of the Russian Revolution.

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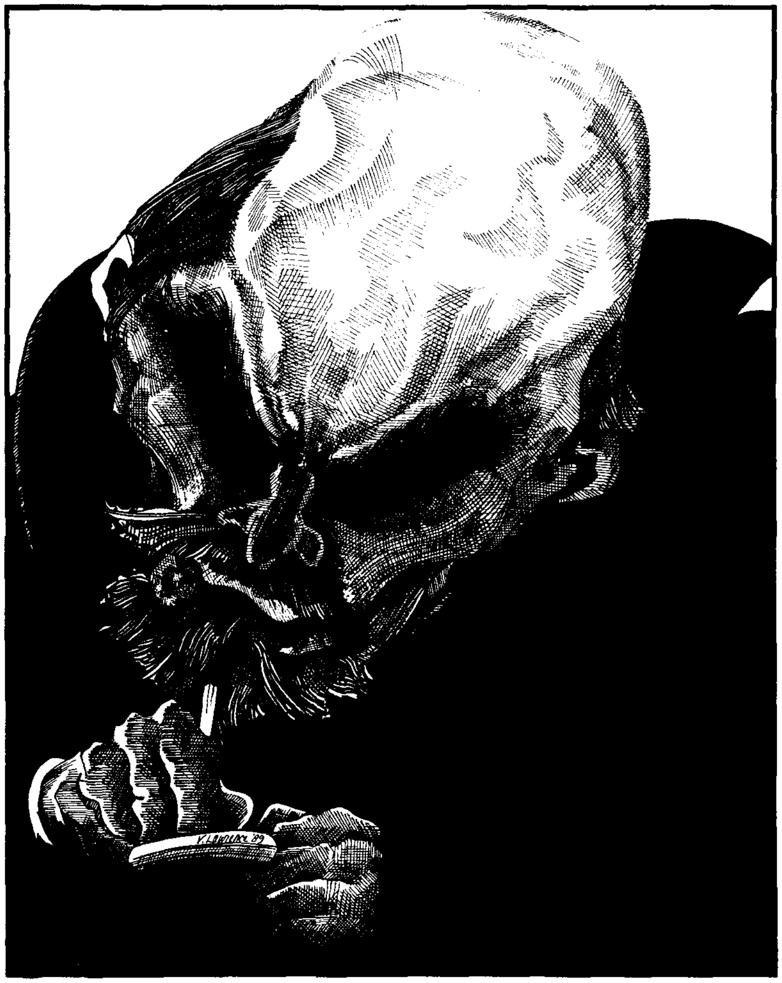
nationalism among the Muslims of Turkestan, the Belorussians, and the smaller ethnic groups of the Russian Republic.

One source of discontentment is demographic. Since the 1920s Russians have been leaving their homeland and moving into the borderlands in search of easier climatic conditions and more consumer goods. They have migrated in large numbers into the Baltic republics, displacing the native populations and creating bitter competition over scarce resources. Between 1959 and 1979 the proportion of Russians in Estonia increased from 20.1 percent to 29.9 percent, and in Latvia from 26.6 to 32.8 percent. While the Latvian population remained virtually static (1.3 million), the Russians there grew by more than 50 percent, and they have been moving in at the same rate in the past decade. No wonder that the small Baltic nations feel threatened and demand control of their territory. Russians have also come in waves into Kazakhas, introducing industry and agriculture into an area that has traditionally pursued pastoral occupations.


V. I. LENIN BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Russians have been convinced the borderlands benefit disproportionately from all-Union investments in industry and defense expenditures. But the ethnic groups consider themselves exploited as suppliers of raw materials at artificially low prices to Soviet industry, located largely in Russian areas. Each party believes it would be better off on its own. The Baltic peoples have successfully asserted considerable economic autonomy and have barred non-resident Russians from raiding their better-stocked shops. Such actions antagonize Russians.

Language is also a major source of friction. Russians who reside or officiate in the republics rarely bother to learn the local languages; they would like Russian to be declared the official tongue of every republic. Minorities have violently resisted attempts to enforce such policies, and some now demand that those living in their republic be required to learn their language.

Although national tensions usually involve Russians and their subject peoples, in several regions minorities are pitted against one another. The most notorious instance is the enmity between Azeri Turks and Armenians, ostensibly over control of the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region, inhabited largely by Armenians but administered by Azerbaijan. The roots of this conflict, however, lie much deeper. At issue is an ancient religious antagonism between Christians and Shiite Muslims, and the result is a conflict not unlike that which is destroying Lebanon. There have been several pogroms of Armenians by Muslims armed with stolen weapons. The area is in a state of acute civil war that Soviet military and security forces have been unable to quell. Nearby, the Muslim Abhazian minority has risen in rebellion against the Georgians. Many Georgians believe that this separatist movement has been encouraged by the KGB to dampen their own nationalist ardor. In the Turkmen Republic recently there were bloody pogroms against migrants from the Caucasus.

Gorbachev has promised to deal boldly with the nationality question, but so far he has done very little. A Central Committee plenum on the subject was postponed for months. When it finally convened in September, the results proved disappointing. In a rambling speech Gorbachev promised the nationalities a greater role in decision-making and the satisfaction of some of their "legitimate" demands, on issues such as language. But on the crucial political issues he adhered to the traditional line. Demands for secession from the Union will not be tolerated, he declared, ignoring that such a right is guaranteed in the constitution. The Communist Party will not "federate," which means it will remain centralized in Moscow. As in so many other respects, Gorbachev is a liberal on marginal issues and a staunch conservative on essentials.

What can the Soviet government be reasonably expected to do about ethnic tensions? If it screws up enough courage, it can replace the existing pseudo-federation with a genuine federal structure, giving the republics the kinds of powers that are enjoyed by the states in the United States. It was an idea that Lenin himself entertained in the last months of his conscious life as he observed with alarm the emergence of ethnic tensions in the Union that he and Stalin had designed. It would require not only decentralizing the state apparatus, but also and above all decentralizing or "federating" the Communist Party, the real locus of sovereignty. This would reserve the central government's ultimate authority over foreign policy, defense, and macroeconomic management but transfer to the republics most power over their internal affairs. It would also make the local Communist Parties responsive to local needs. A Soviet federal state might satisfy many ethnic grievances and help defuse smoldering resentments.

20c SEPTEMBER 24, 1951

Gangs Invade the Unions—page 12

New Republic

Revolt in Russia's Satellites?

How far is the resistance against Russia's Communist dictatorship organized? How far can it be organized? How much help can it be given?

by TRIS COFFIN

EUROPE the Battleground

The third in a series of reports by Michael Straight

COVER, SEPTEMBER 24, 1951

But in the long run even such a solution would be unlikely to endure, and perhaps it is this knowledge that keeps Gorbachev from acting more decisively. Experience suggests that in the modern age nationalist aspirations will not be satisfied with any arrangement short of independence. It may well be that the breakup of large political entities is economically retrograde, but this argument has not prevented the colonial possessions of the West from claiming sovereign status. In the early 1890s Rosa Luxemburg argued against Polish independence on the grounds that Poland was too intimately tied to the economy of Russia to separate itself. And yet Poland gained independence and is regaining it once again. The Marxist argument against nationalism, now commonly heard from Western liberals, has been proved untenable. Curiously, people who were enthusiastic about the breakup of the British, French, or Dutch empire—empires in every way more enlightened than the Russian—seem to contemplate with horror the prospect of a Russia shorn of its colonies.

National tensions in the Soviet Union will continue to escalate because their sources go unaddressed. A Russian backlash is a distinct possibility. Voices are already heard demanding a "Russia for Russians"—that is, a country in which they are the master race. Even so, it is unlikely that history will make an exception for the Soviet Empire. Why, indeed, should the 40,000 inhabitants of St. Kitts and Nevis, once British subjects, enjoy independent statehood and not the 46 million Ukrainians?

If the U.S.S.R. were to break up along ethnic lines, Russia would be reduced to the dimensions of the present Russian Republic. It would lose important raw materials, especially foodstuffs, but it would keep the bulk of industry and many of the most valuable natural resources, which constitute its principal exports, including oil and gold. It would remain, therefore, a major international power, not least because its ex-colonies would have strong inducements to trade with the country with which they had so many economic links in the past. One salutary effect of such a development would be to dampen the *folie de grandeur* in the Russian psyche fostered by the country's immensity. (In a Lermontov poem a Russian tells a Caucasian native whose land he is about to conquer that he will soon be proud to say: "Yes, I am a slave but a slave of the czar of the universe.") With it may vanish some of the less attractive qualities of Russian political culture, notably chauvinism and missionary zeal.

Still, it is possible that events will move in the opposite direction. Beset by mounting economic problems as well as social and ethnic unrest, Gorbachev may well seize dictatorial powers and rule by martial law. In that event, the demands of the ethnic minorities will probably be silenced once again and the illusion revived that the country is a happy comity of nations. This may even be a more likely prospect for the immediate future than the gradual loosening of Russia's grip on its subject peoples. But recourse to force would solve nothing. It would merely heighten the frustrations and increase the tensions, making it still less likely that Russia's imperial problems could be peacefully resolved. •

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UNITED TECHNOLOGIES

What business had we 'over there'?

WAR AGAINST REASON

By Henry Fairlie

War broke out in Europe on August 4, 1914. Three months later the first issue of THE NEW REPUBLIC proclaimed "The End of American Isolation," and its second issue ruled out "comfortable neutrality." Remorselessly, for the next two years and five months, the editors of TNR developed the case for direct American intervention, until the entire issue of March 10, 1917, was devoted to extracts from its previous editorials, illustrating "The Evolution of a National Policy in Relation to the Great War." Three weeks later Woodrow Wilson's chief clerk in the White House saw him "sitting before his little typewriting machine," a Hammond portable, "slowly but accurately and neatly" composing the message that took his country into war. Of all the voices that prepared American public opinion (and to some extent, Wilson's own mind) to accept the inevitability of that decision, the most consistent, intellectually forceful, and zealous was that of this then infant magazine.

The Wilsonian case for going to war has been the conventional wisdom for 75 years. So dense is the consensus, only occasionally challenged by revisionist historians, that it seems almost a heresy to suggest that Wilson's decision was unnecessary and unwise, that there was no justification for it; and that the manner in which he took it has (with a brief interruption in the 1920s) been responsible for a mindset that still bedevils American policy and the nation's life.

By 1917 the European powers had fought themselves to a standstill. Amid the ruin of their continent and the carnage in the trenches, neither side was capable of winning or ending the war. America had to intervene. The question is whether entering the war as a combatant was the only or even the most effective way of bringing America's weight to bear. It was not.

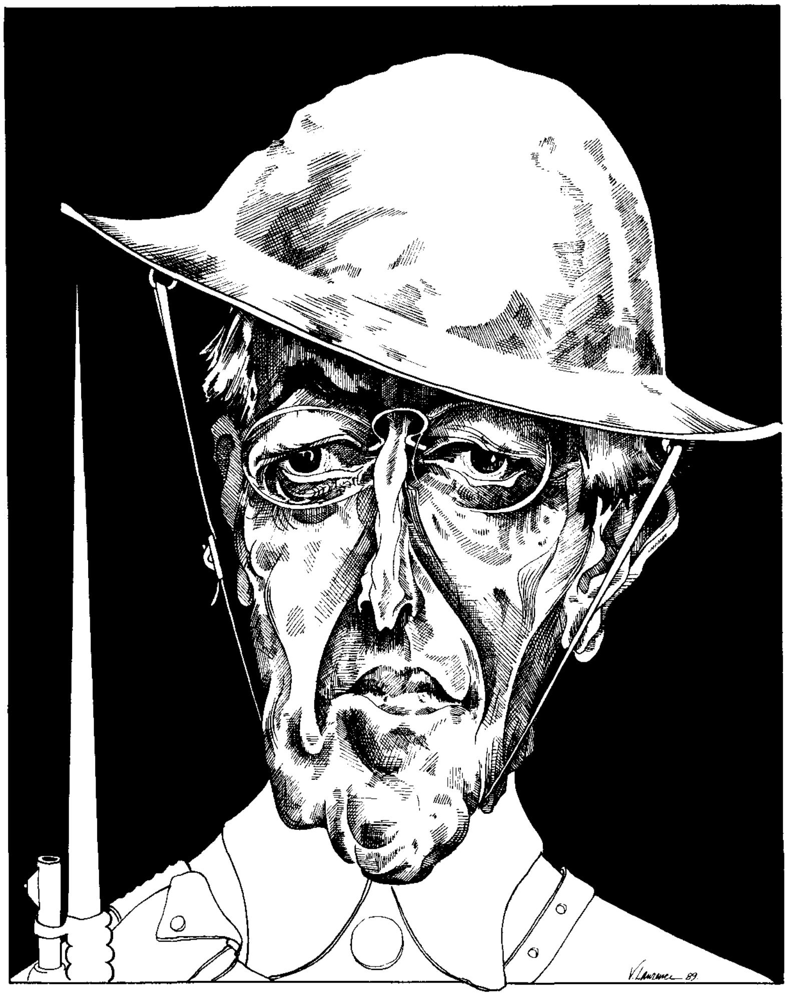
The United States had become the leading manufacturing nation in the world. The value of its exports doubled between 1876 and 1900, giving it a net surplus in its balance of payments, and then, amazingly, doubled again before 1914. An influential British book of 1901 carried the title *The Americanization of the World.* Every great power listened to the puissant new nation across the Atlantic. The most obvious evidence was that, as Britain felt its supremacy slipping westward, a spontaneous cry arose there around 1900, calling for a "special relationship" with America (the birth of the term) and an "Anglo-Saxon" condominium to rule the world—and save the British Empire! It was the time when Kipling exhorted Americans: "Take up the White Man's burden."

With this immense prowess and influence, America could have exerted its diplomacy with more consistency and skill. It is true that Wilson made peace efforts in 1916, and that Germany was foolishly in no mood to accept a negotiated peace. But these efforts were not persistent or well informed, and were frustrated by personal considerations, such as Wilson's choice of his ubiquitous adviser, Colonel House, to be his negotiator. If America had remained neutral, the war (which, after all, ended in armistice, not unconditional surrender) probably could have been brought to a close just as quickly, and America would have retained its moral authority, which it forfeited by becoming merely another combatant. The hostility that Wilson aroused among European nations at the Versailles peace conference, and his loss of authority at home in failing to win support for the League of Nations, were the result of his abandonment of American neutrality, so that the New World became (and has remained ever since) only the latest contributor to the Old World's sorry record of folly.

There was no pretext for going to war until 1917, when the kaiser supported his more belligerent admirals (and general staff) in resuming a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare. Thus he gave Wilson, and the editors of TNR, a plausible casus belli. On February 10, 1917, TNR said that America was "being drawn into war" to keep open the Atlantic sea-lane. "We shall uphold the dominion of the ocean highway as men upheld the Union in 1861." The secondary question is whether this was a sufficient reason to become a belligerent. Again, it was not. The ease with which almost two million American troops were transported to France, mostly in a few months in 1918, suggests that the menace of the U-boat warfare, barbarous as it was, was greatly exaggerated.

It is not even clear what those pushing America into war thought it could accomplish militarily. When Wilson read his war message to Congress, the strength of the American regular Army stood at only 127,588 men. There were 200 German divisions massed on the western front, and in the next two months the British army alone lost 177,000 men in a single offensive. (Britain eventually lost three-quarters of a million men, and France, with half the population, double that number.) Although most of the two million American troops never saw action, I am not denying their contribution or valor in battle. But the presence of American troops in battle surely was not the only or most effective way to use American influence to bring the war to an end.

Americans in 1917 were a generally pacific people who had never expected to participate in a great foreign war. Before 1914 it was extremely rare for even one percent of the male population between 20 and 39 to see military service, and for the annual military expenditure to reach as much as one percent of the GNP. Mark Hanna said in 1897 that the War Department was the only Cabinet office for which a busy man could spare the time from his own affairs. Appointed to the supreme command of the Expeditionary Force, Pershing gazed on the little continental army. "We still maintained our troops in small posts," he wrote later, "as in the days of Indian warfare." That is it in a nutshell. America had barely finished mopping up a few intransigent Indians when Wilson took it into a war between the great monarchies of Europe.



WOODROW WILSON BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The traditional hostility of the American people to a standing army was still so pronounced that in 1911 Congress enacted a law imposing a $500 fine on any public place of entertainment that discriminated against men in uniform. When the proposal for a draft was submitted to Congress in 1917, the Speaker of the House went to the floor to oppose it, comparing the conscript to a convict. As Wilson took the nation to war, he was using martial language. "Force, Force to the utmost, Force without stint or limit," he proclaimed on Flag Day 1917. But where was the martial nation?

It had to be created. This was the work of an extraordinary harmony between the drives of big business and the variety of "progressivism" represented by the editors of TNR. It is here that we come close to the idea that carried America into a foreign war, and changed Wilson from the insistent advocate of American neutrality into a war leader of inflammatory rhetoric, ruthless execution, and global pretensions.

At the conclusion of his *History of the American People* (1902), Wilson noted that they had turned from a deliberate preoccupation with their domestic development to "make conquest of the markets of the world." Seven years later S. D. Scudder of the International Banking Corporation trumpeted to the National Association of Manufacturers: "You have completed the home task. . . . The world is ours!" The phenomenal energy of American industry was of course accompanied by its rapid consolidation into huge corporations, and the impulse was more than aggrandizement for profit. The industrial process, from start to finish, was to be made more rational; and becoming so—this was the astonishing leap—it would make society more rational.

"Rationalization" was the dynamic idea of the time. The needs of industry were obvious. With its consolidation, and the explosive expansion of consumption and production, a much higher degree of standardization was required. The new chemical and electrical industries depended on scientific research and highly developed technologies. In 1901 General Electric announced that it had created its own laboratory "devoted exclusively to original research," and with Westinghouse and Bell also leading the way, scientists were being employed (as David Noble says in his path-breaking study *America by Design*, 1979) "by hundreds where Edison employed them by tens."

The belief that science had given men the opportunity to create a new and beneficent order was never more widespread. It was the time also of Taylorism: Frederick Taylor published his *Principles of Scientific Management* in 1911, and its influence extended far beyond industry. There was a great deal of talk of "rational planning" and "social engineering." All these voices and more can be found in the early TNR, not only in its editorials, but in such an important contributor as John Dewey, whose belief in the scientific method imparted an extraordinary optimism to the seemingly endless programs for reorganizing society that poured forth.

The professional men, scientists, engineers, and managers who entered the corporations—Noble's "corporate liberals"—not only tried to rescue capitalism from its instability, self-defeating greed, and too frequent inhumanity, but "were moved by a shared dream, a compelling vision of an affluent, humane, tranquil, and powerful America." There was the link to the progressivism represented by the editors of TNR, and specifically by Herbert Croly (see "Herbert Croly's Promise" by John B. Judis, page 84), and Walter Lippmann, who argued in *Drift and Mastery* (1914) that men could now escape from the "jungle of disordered growth," because change had become "a matter of invention and deliberate experiment," and science had opened the way to "the discipline of democracy." The fault lay less in the obviously timely idea of "rationalization," especially for industry, than in the failure of intellectuals like the TNR editors to question and resist it, to extract from it only what was necessary, instead of extending it to a wrongheaded missionary zeal to reorder society—and in 1917, the world. Artists were questioning it in vehement protests against "the machine"; the TNR progressives did not.

In the famous rift in progressivism—between those looking back to an idealized age of small units and communities, and those looking forward to directing the large units and corporations—the editors of TNR had moved far from the progressivism of Brandeis, with its Jeffersonian emphasis on pluralism and decentralized power. What is more, although Wilson still consulted Brandeis, by 1914 he was looking for a new idea in anticipation of his campaign for re-election two years later. As Max Lerner has written, "Democratic reformism of the Wilson variety had already pretty much run its course before we entered the war; *in fact, that may have been one of the things pushing us in*." (Italics added.) Between 1914 and 1917 the compact between big business, progressivism, and Wilson was forged. A compelling idea was in the air, and it was in Wilson's mind as he sat before his Hammond portable.

Industrialists in those days spoke more candidly. It is almost engaging that Howard E. Coffin, vice president of the Hudson Motor Company, should tell Congress that "the war in Europe is the greatest business proposition in all time." The purpose of the "war preparedness campaign" after 1914, largely inspired by big business while TNR supplied the intellectual arguments, was to prepare the mind of the nation for war, as if Ypres were to be fought at Hoboken. Since the Germans, according to Allied propaganda, raped Belgian nuns, New Jersey farm girls must be saved from a fate worse than death. In his best seller of that time, Hudson Maxim spoke of *Defenseless America*. Defenseless before whom? The penguins might as well have marched from the South Pole as the army of any nation was likely to invade the United States. But with its monster parades around the country, the preparedness campaign even accustomed the American people to the weapons of modern war on their Main Streets.

The collusion of Wilson's administration was the true beginning of the "military-industrial complex." As early as the middle of 1915, representatives of the leading industrial and engineering associations were summoned by Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy, to act as unpaid consultants. This led to the formation of the Naval Consulting Board, which in turn created an Industrial Preparedness Committee. Its director was Walter S. Gifford, chief statistician of AT&T. (Statistics were to the "corporate liberals" and progressives an important instrument for mastering modern society.) These arrangements were formalized in 1916, when Congress established a Council on National Defense. This body then appointed seven "experts" (i.e., industrialists) to act as a National Defense Advisory Commission, with Gifford again its director. When the commission first met in a hotel room, it recommended that in the event of war the government should depend "largely upon private plants for war matériel." The recommendation cannot have been painful: the recommenders commanded the private plants. In the hundred or so committees they established, the responsibility for transport and communications was entrusted to the president of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad; for supplies, including clothes, to Sears, Roebuck; and so to the committee on canned goods, placed in the hands of the California Packing Corporation, Libby, and H. J. Heinz.

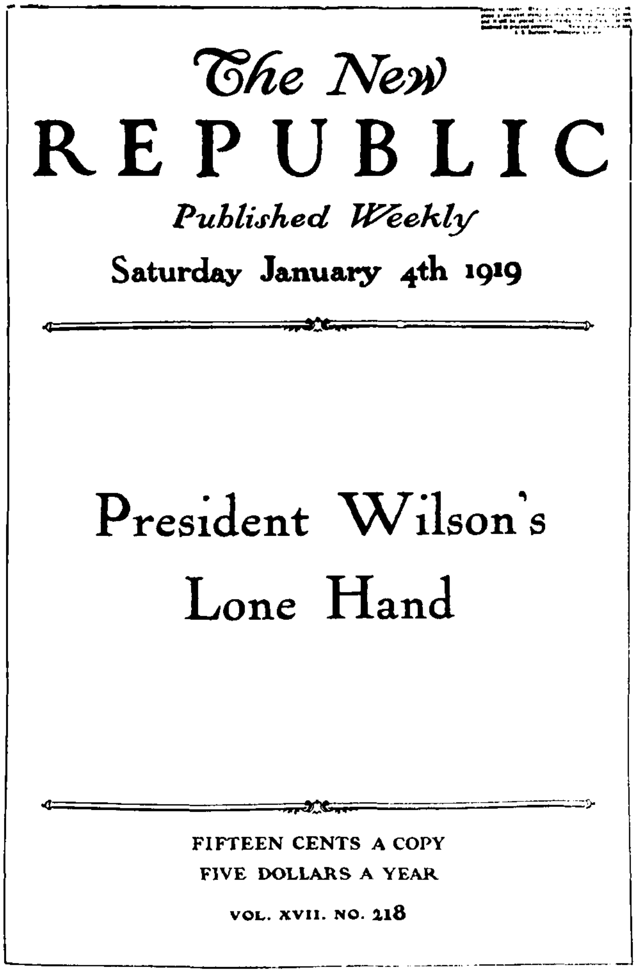
An entire society was to be organized in detail from the center. And none of this elaborate meshing of industry with government was intended only for the emergency. When Wilson announced the names of the seven commissioners, he said that "it opens up a new and direct channel of communication between business and scientific men and all the departments of government." In 1919 the chairman of a select committee of the House investigating the activities of the commission before and during the war reported:

> ... a commission of seven men chosen by the President seems to have devised the entire system of purchasing war supplies, planned a press censorship, designed a system of food control ..., determined on a daylight-saving scheme, and in a word designed practically every measure which Congress subsequently enacted, and did all this behind closed doors, weeks and even months before the Congress of the United States declared war against Germany.

He had reason to be flabbergasted.

None were more zealous in advocating the use of greater centralized authority than the progressives. Wilson chose Newton Baker, one of the "Holy Trinity" of progressive Mayors who won in Ohio before the war, to be his Secretary of War. In 1916 Baker wrote to Wilson that many concerns that he would have left to state governments 20 years before he now considered appropriate for national legislation, "and so I do not know that I have reached any clear conclusion as to where the Federal government ought to stop." Even Brandeis by 1918 advised Wilson to create the War Industries Board under Bernard Baruch, the final apotheosis of the peacetime preparedness committees. The war did not move Wilson into this path; it merely hastened his progress down it, in company with the editors of TNR.

So when Wilson rode to Congress to deliver his War Message on April 2, 1917, Baker provided a troop of cavalry, who did not regard it as a favor to be called out on an evening when the day-long rain was still gusting down Pennsylvania Avenue. Only four weeks before he had ridden the same route for his second inauguration in an open carriage with Mrs. Wilson. Now it was lined thickly with soldiers of two regiments of the New York National Guard. There was nothing ceremonial about the squads of secret service men forming a tight square around his carriage; and most astonishing of all, machine guns were "set at every street corner." But it was to precisely all this that the "war preparedness campaign" had sought to accustom the American people with parades. Thus did Wilson lead the pacific nation into war, with soaring rhetoric and uncontained, missionary idealism: to use "the righteous and triumphant force which shall make right the law of the world, and cast every self dominion down in the dust."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President Wilson's
Lone Hand

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COVER, JANUARY 4, 1919

In spite of some outbursts of whipped-up patriotic hysteria, the incessant war propaganda, and the unnecessary prosecution of many dissidents (including Eugene Debs, who had to wait to be released until 1921, not by Wilson, but as one of the first acts of Harding when he replaced Wilson!), the American people were never enthusiastic about the war and barely touched by it. Brandeis warned the British foreign secretary that the war was not popular with the people, and that they would not undertake any responsibility beyond it: e.g., joint responsibility for a mandate in Palestine. In fact, the revulsion of the American people (and intellectuals) against the war when it was over was in part a rejection of the sweep of the American intervention in the world that Wilson imagined.

Nothing in the argument advanced here is intended to support the isolationism of men such as Robert La Follette and William Borah, who said that America went to war with the dollar sign on the flag. There was no conspiracy. There was merely the unchecked sway of a propelling idea. More important, I am not arguing a case for isolationism in general. I am talking only of America's intervention *in that war*, and of the messianic manner in which Wilson chose to enter it. (Knowing that Wilson was about to announce his Fourteen Points, Lloyd George, like other European statesmen, was so scared by what he regarded as its profound naïveté that he tried to forestall it in the House of Commons with some less far-reaching statements of the Allies' war aims.)

It seems, if one restudies the facts, that if America had stood outside the conflict, its overwhelming economic presence in the world by 1914 could have been used better, both to end the war and to make a lasting peace, instead of one that fell calamitously to pieces within 20 years. The story of the 1920s, now that some historians have demythologized it, is confirmation of this claim. America in the 1920s was not isolationist: in no way. Virtually disarmed but economically dominant, America was a constant presence in Europe, even if its influence was not always wisely used. The European nations could barely move without America, as in the matter of German reparations, and the Dawes Plan and then the Young Plan, both the work of Americans. Economic power is usually worth more than military power.

When American intellectuals (in this case, speaking for the people) lamented after 1919 that America had lost its innocence in 1917, they were not being sentimental. Wilson had tragically warped America's own sense of itself, and for the past 50 years this has been most evident in the too often indiscriminate and ignorant American intervention around the globe; a profligate expenditure on arms in peacetime; and the growth of what is in many respects a garrison state of centralized power and cynical manipulation of its citizens. One of the instruments for which Wilson's administration reached during the war was the more professional advertising that had been developed by big business as part of its rationalization.

Abroad, since Wilson's war, America has become merely another power. At home, it has lost much of its confident pluralism, of which there was one eloquent, visionary spokesman within TNR in those years. Randolph Bourne was already at odds with the progressivism of Croly and Lippmann before 1917. With the entry of America into the war, his break with TNR (and not least with his mentor, Dewey) was complete and embittered. Apart from his famous formulation "War is the health of the state"—that the prosperity of the nation was being made dependent on an industrial war machine with government support—he developed, with the arrival of the mass immigrants, a remarkably coherent notion of a new multiethnic trans-Allegheny pluralism that would release, not constrict, America's founding sense to itself. It was precisely against the "rationalization" of American society, through a centralized power and intellectual elite, that Bourne revolted. Bourne was right.

Creator and critic of the global economy.

KEYNES THE ABLE

By Robert Kuttner

John Maynard Keynes's long association with THE NEW REPUBLIC began in 1919, at the Paris peace conference, where he was economic adviser to the British delegation. There the 35-year-old Keynes met Walter Lippmann, one of TNR's editors, and Felix Frankfurter, a frequent contributor. Keynes quit Versailles in early June, in despair over what the draconian settlement portended. ("I am slipping away from this scene of nightmare," he wrote Prime Minister David Lloyd George.) That summer, as the diplomats were completing their debacle, Keynes worked feverishly on a jeremiad, which was published in 1920 as *The Economic Consequences of the Peace.*

In September he gave a copy of the manuscript to Frankfurter, who was passing through London on the way home from Versailles. Frankfurter, in turn, gave it to Lippmann, who arranged for an American edition to be published by Harcourt, Brace & Co. and for long extracts to be published first in THE NEW REPUBLIC. It was the beginning of a long, fruitful association. Between 1919 and 1938, Keynes wrote 53 pieces for THE NEW REPUBLIC, which became the principal American outlet for his views. Some were original topical dispatches, sent by cable. Others were adaptations of his major essays, such as "The End of Laissez Faire." Keynes's views kept evolving, and so did his NEW REPUBLIC byline: it was first Maynard Keynes, then John Maynard Keynes, and finally J. M. Keynes.

"My purpose," Keynes wrote in his maiden TNR piece, in the issue of December 24, 1919, "is to show that the Carthaginian Peace is not *practically* right or possible. Although the school of thought from which it springs is aware of the economic factor, it overlooks nonetheless the deeper economic tendencies which are to govern the future. The clock cannot be set back. You cannot restore central Europe to 1870 without setting up such strains in the European structure and letting loose such human and spiritual forces as . . . will overwhelm not only you and your 'guarantees,' but your institutions and the existing order of your society." And in a sequel, in THE NEW REPUBLIC of January 14, 1920, Keynes warned, "Economic privation proceeds by easy stages, and so long as men suffer it patiently the outside world cares little . . . until the limit of human endurance is reached and counsels of despair and madness stir the sufferers from the lethargy which precedes the crisis."

Though Keynes is best known for his invention of modern macroeconomics and for his advocacy of high-demand, full-employment economic policies, he was also profoundly concerned as a pamphleteer and statesman with the effect of wrongheaded economics on war and peace. The international economic system of bankers and private capitalists, Keynes realized, was an even more anarchic version of the laissez-faire he so opposed in domestic economics. A national economy, vulnerable to boom and bust, could at least be tamed by Keynesian interventions. But in the absence of supranational institutions of governance, the international economy had an even more pronounced bias toward deflation and instability, and ultimately toward social and military conflict.

This insight informed Keynes's astute critique of Versailles and his bold design for Bretton Woods, and it remains contemporary—and contrarian. Were he alive in 1989, Keynes would surely be railing against the austerity cure for Third World debt, the failure of

ROBERT KUTTNER, TNR's economics correspondent, is the author of *The Economic Illusion* (University of Pennsylvania Press paperback), among other books.

"It was a very big challenge. The Air Force wanted us to develop a flight simulator for air combat training, and they gave us only two months to do it. The time frame made the project even more interesting. What's more, we knew the Air Force expected a lot more from the simulator than they were asking for.

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Well, the Air Force comes away with smiles on their faces every time they get done training with the simulators." *–Rich Cutak, Senior Engineer, Combat Aircraft Flight Simulation with Gary McDonald, Lead Engineer*

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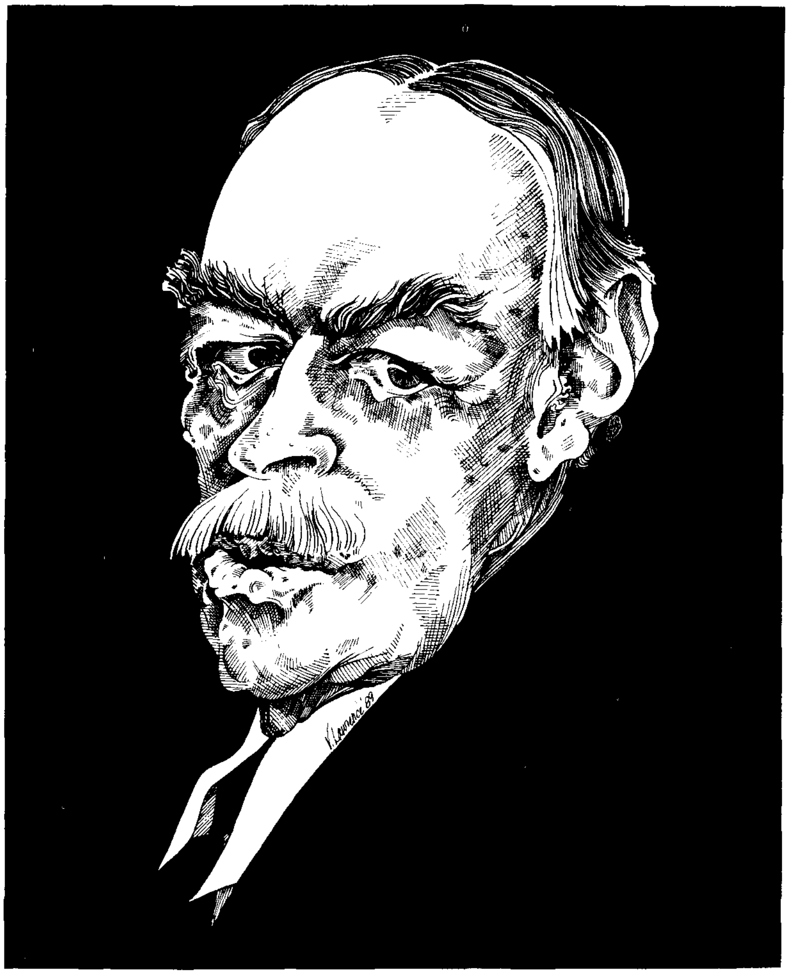
statesmen to repair the international monetary system, and the orthodox view that America must deflate its way to budget balance.

Keynes's diplomatic career was bracketed by the two world wars. At Bretton Woods, a quarter century later, he had the same title as at Versailles: economic adviser to the British Treasury. But by 1944 he was Lord Keynes of Tilton, chief of the British delegation, and determined to have the world financial system avoid the mistakes of Versailles. He succeeded only in part, and not at all in the way he hoped.

In the consultations leading up to Versailles, the French and British political leaders had planned to extract reparations from defeated Germany of at least $25 billion, and as much as $125 billion. Keynes's nemesis at Versailles, the French Finance Minister Louis-Lucien Klotz, was eager to get as much of Germany's gold as possible for the straitened French national treasury. But Keynes warned, in a note to Lloyd George: “Long before the amounts are collected, the Allied governments may, and probably will, find that such collection is doing them as much damage as to the enemy.”

His alternative, spelled out in THE NEW REPUBLIC of January 21, 1920, was simple and radical. Instead of a suicidal daisy chain, in which the French extracted gold from the Germans to repay the British who would in turn repay the Americans, the war debts among the Allies should simply be canceled. Any German “reparations” should be strictly limited to actual physical war damage. The world should not be yoked to a deflationary gold standard. In the orthodox atmosphere of 1920, all of this was economically radical and politically unthinkable. But by 1930 the war debts and the reparations were indeed unpaid and unpayable, and a decade of attempted austerity had ruined the global economy. Keynes's other audacious proposal, a very substantial international loan for European recovery, was also rejected after the first great war and was finally accomplished only after a second one.



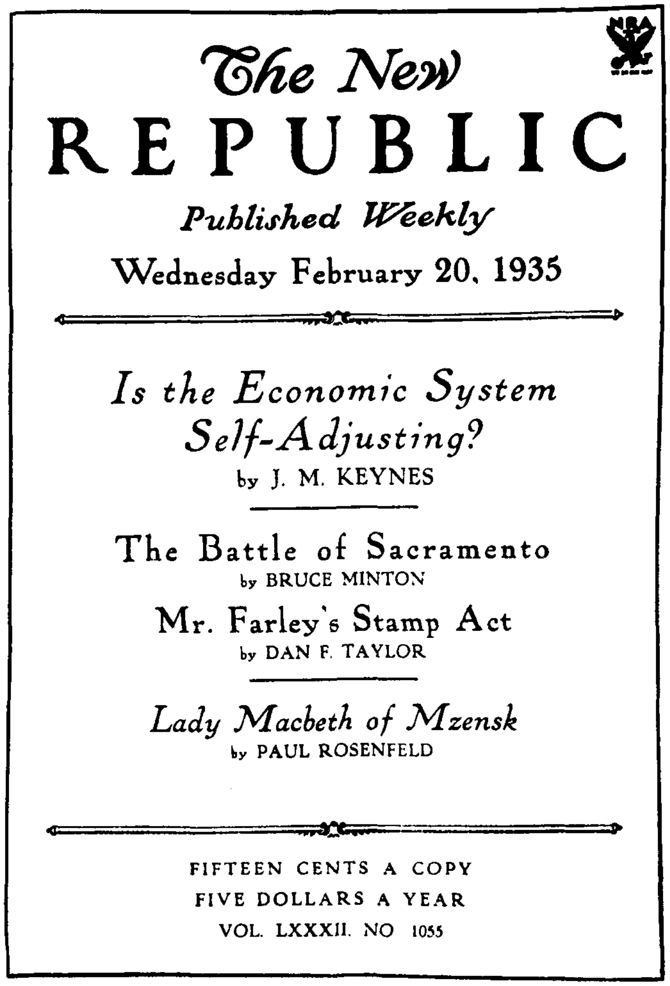
JOHN MAYNARD KEYNES BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

It is no accident that Keynes was an effective journalist, pamphleteer, and diplomat as well as an accomplished technical economist. He had a remarkable gift for demystifying the dismal science and cutting to the kernel of what really matters. “Currency reform has two objects,” he wrote in THE NEW REPUBLIC of January 27, 1924. “To remedy the credit cycle and to mitigate unemployment . . . to link the monetary standard to what matters, namely, the value of staple articles of consumption, instead of to an object of oriental splendor.”

When Keynes was not crusading against the anarchy and deflationary bias of the international financial system, he was slowly building his remarkable countereconomics of stabilized capitalism. In THE NEW REPUBLIC dated February 20, 1935, a year before his great General Theory was published, Keynes contributed a splendid essay titled “A Self-Adjusting Economic System?” to commemorate the magazine's 20th anniversary. “I range myself with the heretics,” he wrote. “But I was brought up in the citadel and I recognize its power and might. A large part of the established body of economic doctrine I cannot but accept as broadly correct. I do not doubt it. For me, therefore, it is impossible to rest until I can put my finger on the flaw in . . . the orthodox reasoning.”

That flaw, Keynes decided, was the idea that a self-regulating economic system will generate just the right level of total purchasing power (“aggregate demand”) and the right level of savings and rate of interest. “This is, however, pure assumption. There is no theoretical reason for believing it to be true. A very moderate amount of observation, unclouded by preconceptions, is sufficient to show that they do not bear it out.” He concluded: “We are, in my very confident belief—a belief, I fear, shared by few, either on the right or on the left—at one of those uncommon junctures of human affairs where we can be saved by the solution of an intellectual problem, and in no other way.”

Keynes's last TNR piece, in the issue of April 13, 1938, a few months before the Munich settlement, called for a new, stronger League of Nations. But in his view of Nazi Germany, Keynes, despite his great liberalism and pacifism, sided with Churchill and against Chamberlain: "We are without conviction, without foresight, without a resolute will to protect what we care for," he lamented. "We just rearm a little more, grovel a little more, and wait to see what happens. We mutter the necessity for collective security and do not lift a finger to achieve it." In the same piece, Keynes called for "organized arrangements for all German and Austrian Jews who wish to migrate."



The New
REPUBLIC
Published Weekly
Wednesday February 20, 1935

Is the Economic System Self-Adjusting?
by J. M. KEYNES

The Battle of Sacramento
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COVER, FEBRUARY 20, 1935

Keynes was the great radical liberal of the first half of our century. Liberal ends—free commerce, free expression, free political institutions—occasionally required radical means, such as simply canceling war debts, or committing large-scale economic planning, or ceding a degree of sovereignty to new supranational public institutions. He remained a committed member of the British Liberal Party, serving both Churchill's coalition War Cabinet and the first postwar Labour government of Clement Attlee.

After playing the prophetic voice during the interwar period, widely honored but seldom heeded, Keynes's moment finally came during the Second War. He lived to see the Keynesian revolution in academic economics, and to serve as a principal architect of the postwar financial system built at Bretton Woods. Yet although the Bretton Woods system (and the engagement of the United States in the world financial and geopolitical system) did avoid many of the disastrous mistakes of Versailles, it fell far short of what Keynes wanted. It failed to accept his proposal for an international reserve currency (which Keynes called Bancor, a contraction of the French words for bank and gold). He lived just long enough to attend the organizational meeting of the Bretton Woods institutions, at Savannah, Georgia, in February 1946, where his grand design was truncated into something far more orthodox. He suffered his final heart attack on the train out of Savannah, and died a few weeks afterward.

For all its boldness, the Bretton Woods system in practice failed to cede real sovereignty to supranational institutions. It failed to build on Keynes's idea that monetary adjustments should occur with surplus nations expanding their economies rather than debtor nations being compelled to deflate theirs. Keynes's International Monetary Fund mutated into a collection agency for commercial bankers. The World Bank never quite played the central role envisioned at Bretton Woods, as the central agent of postwar reconstruction. Ultimately, it was the cold war, American engagement, the Marshall Plan, and the U.S. dollar that played the Keynesian role as both flywheel and engine of growth.

This worked well enough until the United States ceased to be able to play that role. Unfortunately, in the 1980s most of the Keynesian dilemmas of international finance have re-emerged, and nobody in sight with Keynes's prestige is playing his role. Sadly, too, as Keynesian macroeconomics was absorbed into the canon of economic orthodoxy, it had to be thoroughly denatured. Nowhere to be found is the radicalism of the Keynes who demanded heroic measures to assure full employment, who could propose forced savings for the rich rather than "supply-side" carrots to induce greater concentrations of wealth, and who knew that free trade sometimes had to be subordinated to a domestic economics of high growth. Keynes taught that macroeconomics mattered. Today's neo-Keynesians often teach that *only* macroeconomics matters. The late Cambridge economist Joan Robinson, Keynes's student, called this tradition Bastard Keynesianism.

Looked at in Keynesian terms, the moderate economic recovery of the 1980s has little to do with supply-side tax incentives. Its engine is simply deficit spending. Distributively, it has made the rich richer and the poor poorer, and without improving America's anemic rate of savings and capital formation. On the contrary, it has depressed the savings rate and left the real interest rate far too high. The recovery, with a growth rate slower than the postwar average, has proceeded with seeming steadiness only because America is gradually selling off pieces of its real wealth to finance the deficit. Globally, the most profound Keynesian conundrum is the chal-

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The New
REPUBLIC
A Journal of Opinion

VOLUME I New York Saturday 7th November 1914 NUMBER 1

THE New Republic is frankly an experiment. It is an attempt to find national audience for a journal of interpretation and opinion. Many people believe that such a journal is out of place in America; that if a periodical is to be popular, it must first of all be entertaining, or that if it is to be serious, it must be detached and select. Yet when the plan of The New Republic was being discussed it received spontaneous welcome from people in all parts of the country. They differed in theories and programmes; but they agreed that if The New Republic could bring sufficient enlightenment to the problems of the nation and sufficient sympathy to its complexities, it would serve all those who feel the challenge of our time. On the conviction that this is possible The New Republic is founded. Its success inevitably depends on public support, but if we are unable to achieve that success under the conditions essential to sound and disinterested thinking, we shall discontinue our experiment and make way for better men. Meanwhile, we set out with faith.

* * *

APART from the narrow margin whereby the Democrats retained control of the House of Representatives, the salient feature of the election is the apparently reactionary revulsion of popular opinion. Progressivism of all kinds has fared badly. The Progressive Party has been reduced to an insignificant remnant. The unprogressive members of the older parties are much more conspicuous on the face of the returns than are their progressive brethren. If we may judge by the fate of the proposed woman's suffrage amendments, progressive legislation has fared as ill as progressive candidates. The revulsion appears to be complete. No explanation can explain it away, but how is it to be explained?

In all probability it is more than anything else an exhibition of fatigue. Popular interest has been strained by a political agitation which has lasted too long and has made a too continuous demand upon its attention. It is tired of Congresses which do not adjourn, of questions which are always being discussed and never being settled, of supposed settlements which fail to produce the promised results, and of a ferment which yields such a small net return of good white bread. The voter whose interest is flagging reverts to his habits. He had been accustomed to vote as a member of one party when business was good, and sometimes to change over to the other party when business was bad. Business has been undeniably bad. His attention was not diverted from the business depression by the impulse of new and attractive political objects. On the contrary, progressive politics and economics had ceased to be either new or attractive. So the good voter cast his ballot as one or the other kind of a partisan, and the bi-partisan system has regained some of its old vitality. Neither should the substantial contribution which President Wilson has made to this result be overlooked. His scrupulous loyalty to his own party, and his determination to govern by means of a partisan machine and the use of partisan discipline, has resulted in the recrudescence of merely partisan Republicanism, and the increased political importance to the individual voter of a close connection with one of the two dominant parties.

* * *

THE severest blow which non-partisan progressivism received at the elections came from the apparently successful Senatorial candidacies of Sherman in Illinois, Gallinger in New Hampshire, and Penrose in Pennsylvania. These three gentlemen are all of them machine politicians with unsavory records, who represent everything most obnoxious to an American progressive. They were to a considerable extent opposed by the progressive elements in their own parties. Yet they were all nominated and elected by popular vote, and no adherent of popular government can question their title to their offices. The meaning of the lesson is unmistakable. Direct primaries and the direct popular election of Senators will not contribute much to the triumph of genuine political and social democracy so long as partisan allegiance remains the dominant fact in the voter's mind. Bi-partisanship will continue until the end of time to produce its crop of Penroses and Gallingers. Nor can the bi-partisan system be broken down by occasional outbreaks of non-partisanship. That was the delusion of the former Mugwumps. The average American voter will cease to be partisan only in so far as political and social agitation uncover for him positive objects of political action which retain his interest and command his allegiance. For the time being, his interest is relaxed and he is drifting back to his former habits, but he is as certain to recover his interest as the grass is to grow after rain. It is only the old and the sick and the feeble who do not recover from fatigue and yield once again to the temptation and stimulus of positive political and social effort.

* * *

A RECORD of more than fifty volumes having already been produced under the bored attention of a Referee, the government dissolution suit against the U. S. Steel Corporation has at last straggled into the United States Circuit Court. Argument was begun a fortnight ago. Judges and counsel; clerks and secretaries; and stenographers who have grown up, married and settled down on the job; plaintiff, defendant and newspaper readers, all know that the decision, whatever it is, will no sooner be announced than preparations will begin for carrying the case to the Supreme Court. There the same record, built upon still more vertiginously, will appear again; the same counsel will present the same arguments; the same clerks, the same secretaries, the same stenographers, their progeny increased, will transcribe the same testimony; and Bill the Lizard, writing with his finger on the slate, may be expected to go on writing the evidence quite in the manner of the famous case of the Queen's tarts.

* * *

IT is rumored that a certain number of American statesmen are acquainted with the fact that the war was certain to produce severe unemployment this winter. You might think this knowledge would have cast a slight shadow over the congratulation which the Democratic Congress bestowed upon itself, that it might have received at least a little comment from the candidates, and some concerted thought from the states. Yet instead of adequate provision, what we seem to be witnessing is the usual drift into the suffering of the winter, amidst the appointment of hasty commissions to investigate, and the threats and shouts of the I. W. W. Public officials will feel themselves abused for not being able to do what they don't know how to do; there will be a scurry to provide beds and food; a few anemic employment bureaus will lift their timid heads.

And all the while the damning fact will remain that the problem could have been foreseen, that the first steps in its treatment are known. How then shall we explain to the men who are out of work why no adequate labor exchanges exist, why no form of insurance has ever been publicly discussed? What answer shall we make to their own simple diagnosis, which says that mayors and governors and legislatures are afraid to attack the private employment agencies or that the great mass of people are too preoccupied to care? They will point out that the cotton planters of the South were interesting to the whole nation; they will wonder why they, sitting dejectedly on park benches, are so little thought about. When their fighting blood stirs, and they say that they will be heard and felt, that they propose to sting us into recognition, shall we simply ask them to be quiet, to slink into corners, and to pardon us if we have failed to provide for what we could so easily have foreseen?

* * *

IT is fervently to be hoped that Switzerland will give credence to Minister Ritter's denial of attacks upon that country by the American press because it did not officially protest against the violation of Belgian territory. Whatever indiscretions may have been committed by irresponsible journals, we can assure Switzerland that there has been no organized attempt to inflame the minds of our people against that tall but thin republic. While as a nation we do not admit that Switzerland is in advance of the United States in any respect except alphabetically, we have only friendly feelings toward her, if any. We do not desire a war with Switzerland, especially at this time, when communications are so shattered that war could not be carried on with any degree of comfort. Lest this be thought national cowardice, let us hasten to add that if Switzerland invades our shores she will find us ready to a man to defend our hearthstones.

* * *

NEXT Thursday in the Southern city of Nashville the women suffragists of America meet in national convention. In view of recent political events, this may well prove to be the most momentous deliberation in the history of their cause. Up to the present the mission of the national body has been primarily educational. It is now inevitably political as well, and in this forthcoming convention it is called on to affirm its nation-wide political policy. The National Association must face the issue precipitated by the adventurous group which, adapting English tactics, attacks the Democratic party as a whole. This group frankly regards the Democratic party as "the government of the day," and seeks to drive it out of power in punishment for its failure to amend the constitution. Whether this policy is good or not, it is opposed to the strong non-partisan tradition of the National Association, and it is a question on which the parent body should clear its own mind. Then, again, the rival constitutional amendments need to be discussed on their merits. One, as is well known, is the straight amendment decreeing national suffrage. The other, devised last year, provides for submitting the question to the voters of each state by initiative petition. The supporters of the second amendment have national suffrage in view, but they believe the longest way round is the shortest way home. It is healthy that there should be rivalry on this question. On the question of party tactics, however, rivalry is a politer name for dissension. And if the suffrage agitation is to be anything more than political gymnastics, the less dissension and the more candid understanding, the better.

◆

THOUGH events of historic importance are happening in Mexico to-day, it is almost impossible to find out anything about them. From the meager news which trickles into the newspapers we catch glimpses of revolutionary programs, of moving armies, of a country so profoundly disorganized that civil law has practically disappeared and all security laid at the mercy of military chiefs. We see "generals" in a convention founded on no expressed popular assent making decisions for Mexico which may at any moment provoke widespread violence and entail unforeseen international consequences. But the facts as they come through the newspapers are so bare, the interpretations are so haphazard and inadequate, that no one outside of official circles in Washington can secure any sort of consecutive impression of what is happening. We know that Huerta is gone, we gather that the Constitutionalists are divided; and there the average man's knowledge stops. He is still vaguely aware that American troops occupy Vera Cruz, but over the question of their withdrawal he has not sufficient facts to make up his mind. Yet when we remember that conditions in Mexico have several times within the last years brought us to the verge of war, that within a few months the United States has actually seized a Mexican port, the failure of the press to keep us informed seems like a wanton neglect of duty.

It is all very well to fill newspapers and magazines with denunciations of the secret and undemocratic diplomacy of Europe. So long as our own foreign relations are left in darkness Europe might well retort that it is not for us to throw stones. In regard to Mexico the newspapers have an opportunity of showing that popular diplomacy in possession of the facts is more hopeful than the European entanglements they denounce. It is no answer to say that the people are not interested in Mexico. It is the business of journalism to make important events interesting by making them intelligible, and in Mexico the possibilities are always so explosive that easy-going ignorance is out of the question. Moreover, when it is claimed that the sensations of the war in Europe make everything else dull, it would be well to remember that our greatest contribution to the world just now would be an example of how a thoroughly informed and powerful democracy can promote the national interests of a weak and struggling neighbor.

◆

WHEN President Jackson first laid down the proposition that the President is the direct representative of the people, there was a furious outcry from Congress, and Jackson's claim was denounced as an arrogant usurpation of the constitutional prerogative of Congress. The present attitude of Congress appears to be one of acquiescence. In a recent debate Senator Thomas, of Colorado, referred to the President as one "whom the people regarded, and constantly regard more and more, as their representative, as the protector of their interests, as contradistinguished from members of Congress, who, of course, represented only states and districts in states." Nobody had a word of objection to make to this statement, although it was enough to make Clay and Webster turn over in their graves. Quite in line with the doctrine of the President as the only representative of the nation is the President's letter reviewing and commending the work of Congress, which was printed in the Record with Representative Underwood's grateful acknowledgments. It comes to this, that Congress no longer pretends to represent the general welfare, but simply local and particular interests. That being the case, there is manifest need for the adjustment of political structure to the representative function of the President. To discharge that function properly the President should have the right to introduce bills and bring them to vote. National interest should at least have as fair an opportunity of obtaining consideration as district interests.

◆

THE opposition to a minimum wage law for women is curiously compounded of interested employers, abstract theorists and conservative and radical unionists. It presents a picture of the I. W. W., department store managers, Samuel Gompers, and a half dozen professional economists fighting side by side. The relation between republican France and autocratic Russia is a simple harmony compared to this group of allies so single-minded for such various reasons. We do not pretend to have fathomed the reasons, for they range all the way from the reasons of employers who like sweating, through those of thinkers who believe in laissez-faire, to those of labor unionists who wish to monopolize the interests of the workers. In this network of confused opposition the New York State Factory Investigation Commission is now hesitating. The Commission is to report to the Legislature in January, but its decision is now in the making, and there is danger that the strength of the opposition may balk its recommendations.

Against every form of opposition must be weighed the supreme fact that there are industries in this State which do not pay enough wages to support life. Even if the minimum wage did not have behind it a long record of fairly successful practice, any proposal to end such a condition would be an experiment which New York State could afford to try, and should. No other agency has yet been suggested which reaches the most deeply exploited groups of women workers, and none which proposes in direct and dignified fashion to place within the state bulwarks below which American civilization shall not sink.

To those who complain that the sweated industries could not survive, the obvious and irrefutable answer is that industries which can't support themselves are uneconomic and should not be subsidized out of the health and sanity of their employees. If any subsidy is necessary, if the real cause of bad conditions isn't an intolerable inefficiency, then the subsidy should be public and frank. To those who fear State interference the reply is that voluntary action has failed. To those who point out that much of this sweated labor is incompetent the reply is that it must either be made competent or treated openly as a public charge. To those who realize the administrative difficulties of minimum wage legislation the reply is that wisdom and skill are made by experience.

◆

ALTHOUGH Americans have responded with splendid generosity to the appeal of the starving Belgians, it becomes daily more apparent that no merely private philanthropy will suffice to meet this stupendous relief problem. Even in times of peace, millions of Belgians, because of their poverty, are chronically underfed; to-day starvation threatens to become universal. Year by year, despite a marvelously intensive cultivation of the soil, Belgium has become increasingly dependent upon foreign nations for her food. With the nation's ports now sealed by war, its railroads wrecked, its farm-horses killed or commandeered, its cattle gone, its harvest ungathered or confiscated, there is to-day no food for the six or seven millions of people still huddled in the little kingdom. The cost of feeding a whole nation should not be borne entirely by philanthropic individuals.

What we propose is that Belgium's allies, England and France, deposit each month with the American government the sum of five or six million dollars, necessary for the most inadequate and partial relief of Belgian distress. Food could be shipped from this country, and by arrangement with Germany could be distributed that none of it would pass into the hands of Germans. The cost of such relief, even if it went further than mere food and amounted to one or two hundred million dollars during the year, could in the end be met by Belgium itself, or be paid for by the vanquished, and in any case it would be an inconsiderable item in the war budgets of the allied nations. The problem, however, is immediate. Unless something upon a national scale is done soon and is planned immediately, we shall witness the slow catastrophe of a whole people.

◆

STUDENTS of financial phenomena are hard pressed for a satisfactory explanation of the increase of $111,000,000 in the gold holdings of the Imperial German Bank since the war began. Those of the Bank of England have increased even more ($162,000,000 since the low point in August), but that is different. London, though its stock exchange is closed and notwithstanding the English moratorium, is still the money center of the world, and has the power to command gold from other countries. Germany is financially and commercially isolated from all the rest of the world, save, of course, Austria, which in this matter does not count. The Imperial Bank could have built up its gold holdings only out of the national resources. What were they? It is supposed that the Kaiser's famous war chest was emptied into the Bank, but that would account for only $60,000,000, so that $50,000,000 would still remain to be accounted for. Where did that come from? One theory is that it has been "gained from the circulating medium," which is to suppose that people, instead of hoarding gold privately, have actually been surrendering it for banknotes. That is a wholly unsatisfactory explanation, one financial writer declares, "unless all previous principles of political economy have been turned upside down." And why not? One weakness of political economy has been to disregard human emotion of the sort that does not turn its principle upside down. That could easily happen, for instance, in a country where the brides prefer iron rings to gold ones, and married women send their gold bands to be melted up for the war fund, replacing them with iron, as they are doing now and as they did one hundred years ago, giving the Emperor his inspiration for that wholesale and inexhaustible symbol of distinction, the Order of the Iron Cross.

Force and Ideas

EVERY sane person knows that it is a greater thing to build a city than to bombard it, to plough a field than to trample it, to serve mankind than to conquer it. And yet once the armies get loose, the terrific noise and shock of war make all that was valuable seem pale and dull and sentimental. Trenches and shrapnel, howitzers and forts, marching and charging and seizing—these seem real, these seem to be men's work. But subtle calculations in a laboratory, or the careful planning of streets and sanitation and schools, things which constitute the great peaceful adventure of democracy, seem to sink to so much whimpering futility.

Who cares to paint a picture now, or to write any poetry but war poetry, or to search the meaning of language, or speculate about the constitution of matter? It seems like fiddling when Rome burns. Or to edit a magazine—to cover paper with ink, to care about hopes that have gone stale, to launch phrases that are lost in the uproar? What is the good now of thinking? What is a critic compared to a battalion of infantry? This, men say, is a time for action, any kind of action. So, without a murmur, the laboratories of Europe are commandeered as hospitals, a thousand half-finished experiments abandoned. There was more for the future of the world in those experiments than we dare to calculate. They are tossed aside. The best scholarship has turned press agent to the General Staff. The hope of labor is absorbed, the great plans built on the surplus of wealth are dropped, for the armies have to be financed. Merely to exist has become a problem, to live finely seems to many a derelict hope.

Yet the fact remains that the final argument against cannon is ideas. The thoughts of men which seem so feeble are the only weapons they have against overwhelming force. It was a brain that conceived the gun, it was brains that organized the armies, it was the triumph of physics and chemistry that made possible the dreadnought. Men organized this superb destruction; they created this force, thought it, dreamed it, planned it. It has got beyond their control. It has got into the service of hidden forces they do not understand. Men can master it only by clarifying their own will to end it, and making a civilization so thoroughly under their control that no machine can turn traitor to it. For while it takes as much skill to make a sword as a ploughshare, it takes a critical understanding of human values to prefer the ploughshare.

That is why civilization seems dull and war romantic to unimaginative people. It requires a trained intelligence to realize that the building of the Panama Canal by the American Army is perhaps the greatest victory an army ever won. Yet the victories of peace are less renowned than those of war. For every hundred people who can feel the horrors of the battlefield, how many are there who feel the horror of the slum? For every hundred people who admire the organization of war, how many are there who recognize the wasteful helter-skelter of peace?

It is no wonder, then, that war, once started, sweeps everything before it, that it seizes all loyalties and subjugates all intelligence. War is the one activity that men really plan for passionately on a national scale, the only organization which is thoroughly conceived. Men prepare themselves for campaigns they may never wage, but for peace, even when they meet the most acute social crisis, they will not prepare themselves. They set their armies on a hair-trigger of preparation. They leave their diplomacy archaic. They have their troops ready to put down labor disputes; they will not think out the problems of labor. They turn men into military automata, stamp upon every personal feeling for what they call the national defence; they are too timid to discipline business. They spend years learning to make war; they do not learn to govern themselves. They ask men to die for their country; they think it a stupid strain to give time to living for it.

Knowing this, we cannot abandon the labor of thought. However crude and weak it may be, it is the only force that can pierce the agglomerated passion and wrong-headedness of this disaster. We have learnt a lesson. We know how insecurely we have been living, how grudging, poor, mean, careless has been what we call civilization. We have not known how to forestall the great calamity. We have not known enough, we have not been trained enough, ready enough, nor radical enough to make our will effective. We have taken the ideas that were thrust upon us, we have believed what we were told to believe. We have got into habits of thought when unnecessary things seemed inevitable, in panic and haste we stumbled into what we did not want.

We shall not do better in the future by more stumbling and more panic. If our thought has been ineffective we shall not save ourselves by not thinking at all, for there is only one way to break the vicious circle of action, and that is by subjecting it endlessly to the most ruthless criticism of which we are capable. It is not enough to hate war and waste, to launch one unanalyzed passion against another, to make the world a vast debating ground in which tremendous accusations are directed against the Kaiser and the financiers, the diplomatists and the gun manufacturers. The guilt is wider and deeper than that. It comes home finally to all those who live carelessly, too lazy to think, too preoccupied to care, afraid to move, afraid to change, eager for a false peace, unwilling to pay the daily costs of sanity.

We in America are not immune to what some people imagine to be the diseases of Europe. Nothing would be easier for us than to drift into an impossible situation, our life racked and torn within and without. We, too, have our place in the world. We have our obligations, our aggressions, our social chasms, our internal diseases. We are unready to deal with them. We are committed to responsibilities we do not understand, we are the victims of interests and deceptive ideas, and nothing but our own clarified effort can protect us from the consequences. We, too, can blunder into horror.

A Narrow Escape for the Democrats

THE returns of the election on Tuesday indicate that the Democrats have retained by a narrow margin their hold on the confidence of the country. Their majority in the House of Representatives has been cut down to the barely necessary figure. Their majority in the Senate will remain about stationary. But the loss, severe as it is, has stopped short of being disastrous. The Democrats remain in responsible and effective control of all the departments of the national government. They have managed to keep this control, as they gained it, not because anything like a majority of the voters are Democrats, but because of division among their opponents. In 1912 the larger proportion of the divided opposition were Progressives. In 1914 a vastly larger proportion are Republicans. Although the change is enormously significant, it does not affect the central fact, which is the continued ascendancy of the Democrats for at least two years more.

The Democrats deserved more success than they have obtained. The administration of President Wilson and its supporting majority in Congress have made a surprisingly good record. Their defeat at the polls would not have been a well-merited condemnation; it would have been due to a meaningless and purposeless fluctuation of popular opinion. The American people are to be congratulated on the fact that the reaction stopped short of being decisive, and that we are to be spared the spectacle of futile partisan squabbling which is the inevitable result of divided governmental control.

The Democrats came into power pledged to accomplish a tolerably progressive economic program by means of the traditional partisan political machinery. They were to be progressive, in the sense that American public opinion understands progressivism; but they were not to allow their progressivism to make them any less loyally partisan. Under the relentless yet adroit leadership of President Wilson they succeeded in reconciling their apparently incompatible objects much better than had the Republicans. Their success in satisfying the progressive element in public opinion was sufficiently indicated by the embarrassment of their opponents. In order to justify their own party progressivism, the Progressives needed to fasten upon the Democracy the stigma of being reactionary; and this they were totally unable to do. Their campaign did not rise above an unsuccessful attempt to defeat certain local "bosses," who were more generally Republican than Democratic, and whose candidacy had in every case been endorsed at a direct primary election. The Republican vote benefited from the weakness of the Progressives and the consequently renewed vitality of the bipartisan system; but as an alternative to the Democrats they certainly cut, in reference to the merits of the discussion, a sorry figure. The best they could do was to raise the old and meretricious cry of business depression, and thus to betray how completely they were still living in the past. Under the circumstances the Democrats were fairly entitled to a longer lease of power.

During this campaign the Democrats made much of their legislative record, of which they could be justifiably proud. They had been courageous enough to eradicate the worst abuses of the protectionist system, and by so doing to incur a real risk of unpopularity in many farming and industrial districts. Their Federal Reserve Act brought about a desirable centralization of the banking resources of the country, while at the same time it satisfied the demands of local centers of business for a larger measure of financial independence of New York. The reorganization of the national banking system is the more remarkable, because it is the only example of constructive economic legislation ever passed by the Democratic party during almost four generations of continuous existence. It deserves to be considered as the most promising single achievement of President Wilson's administration. The anti-trust legislation also proved to be better than the preliminary advertisements prophesied. The Trade Commission Act has fastened upon an administrative body an immediate responsibility for preventing unfair competitive methods. The Clayton Bill will probably do more harm than good, but the final draft constituted such a marked improvement upon the earlier versions that in its capacity as substitute it can at least be considered an example of successful destructive legislation. Finally, the Alaskan Railway Bill and the other measures for making the natural resources in the public domain available for development were drawn in the interest of genuine conservation. Such a uniformly good record must have been the result of an honest, intelligent, and insistent endeavor to legislate in the public interest.

Yet while the Democrats have remained ascendant, their ascendancy has become much more precarious and exacting. They have become more than ever a governing minority. Their very success in reconciling progressivism with Democracy has been slowly tending to consolidate the opposition. The influence of the progressive element within their own ranks will be weakened just in so far as the Progressive party falls to pieces and its members revert to Republicanism. Public opinion is acquiescent, but dangerously apathetic. The administration has enlisted a sufficient measure of popular respect, but it has not kindled popular enthusiasm or touched the popular imagination. The association of progressivism with partisan Democracy has made it more efficient for certain limited purposes, but less interesting and significant. The progressive movement has lost thereby singleness of purpose, alertness of intelligence, intensity of conviction, and a seductive vista of future achievement.

The work of a sincerely progressive democracy has only begun. The legislation passed by the Democratic party has not made any impression upon the more serious and difficult social and industrial problems of contemporary America. The consumer's need for a lower cost of living has been left unsatisfied; the business organization of the country continues to be wasteful and inefficient; the financial system of the Federal Government remains no less extravagant and irresponsible; nothing has been done to diminish unemployment, to improve the general standard of living, to remove the causes of increasing unrest among wage-earners. The President has sometimes talked as if his program of tariff revision, banking reorganization and anti-trust legislation contained a complete and final solution of the problems of modern American democracy. These measures are to provide for a new constitution of freedom, which is also a constitution of peace. If the President and his party are actually deceived by such phrases, they will pay dearly for their unintelligence. Nothing of any importance has as yet been accomplished to bestow freedom and peace on the American nation. The new Democratic Congress will be confronted with legislative responsibilities even graver than those which have already been met, and these new responsibilities will put their combination of partisanship with progressivism to a still severer test. The combination may survive, but if so, the Democracy will have to pay for the privilege of keeping such good company by abandoning many of their traditional shibboleths and by seeking an access of inward light and grace.

The End of American Isolation

THE self-complacent isolation of a great people has never received a ruder shock than that which was dealt to the American nation by the outbreak of the European war. We have long been congratulating ourselves on something more than an official independence of Europe. We considered ourselves free in a finer and a deeper sense—free from the poison of inherited national antipathies, free from costly and distracting international entanglements, free from a more than incidental reliance on foreign markets for the sale of our products, free to make mistakes with impunity and to gather fruits by merely shaking the tree. We were more nearly self-contained, more completely the master of our own destiny, than any other nation of history. Yet this consummate example of political independence has been subjected to a visitation of fate almost as disconcerting as those which beset wandering Indian tribes. There broke over the country a European war which the American people individually and collectively were powerless to prevent or to mitigate, yet which may have consequences upon the future and policy of the country as profound and far-reaching as our self-made Civil War. Independence in the sense of isolation has proved to be a delusion. It was born of the same conditions and the same misunderstandings as our traditional optimistic fatalism; and it must be thrown into the same accumulating scrapheap of patriotic misconceptions.

The American nation was wholly unprepared to cope with such a serious political and economic emergency. It possessed no organization and no equipment with which to protect its citizens against the loss and the suffering caused by the war. It was equally unprepared to take advantage of the opportunities for an increase in foreign trade which the sudden belligerency of the European powers thrust into its hands. No disposition was shown to sit down patiently under the affliction. The industries and interests whose prosperity was affected jumped swiftly to the conclusion that a loss which was the result of an international crisis, and which was serious enough to threaten their own subsequent economic efficiency, should not fall upon themselves alone, but should be redistributed. They all promptly appealed to the government for assistance either in carrying the burden or in taking advantage of the unexpected opportunities. The railroads demanded an increase in rates as compensation for diminution in business. The cotton-growers tried to draw an additional five cents a pound for their cotton out of the United States Treasury. Congress was asked to provide the ships which were needed to transport American products to foreign countries; and it actually consented to place upon the nation the extraordinary risks of marine insurance. In every direction the need of more flexible and responsible national business organization was apparent, yet everywhere the country was obliged to put up with unsatisfactory makeshifts. There was no adequate political and business machinery for dealing with an essentially collective business emergency. Winter will soon set in without the making of a proper provision for the relief of the greatest sufferers from the war, who are not railroads or cotton-growers or brokers, but the increasing body of unemployed wage-earners. The national economic system has been wholly unable to meet the obligations, which in the opinion of the great majority of American citizens the war had imposed upon it.

The American people were as ill-prepared to meet the spiritual challenge of the war as they were to protect themselves against its distressing economic effects. Their sense of international isolation has bred in them a combination of crude colonialism with crude nationalism. In the beginning they constituted themselves into a supreme court, whose affair it was to sit in judgment on the sins of Europe. They passed the day in objurgating the war, in abusing Europe for bringing it to pass, and in crying for peace at a moment when there could and should be no peace. But their protests against the war did not prevent them from taking sides violently for or against the Allies, and from giving expression to latently bellicose sympathies and antipathies. They traveled so far along this road that President Wilson felt obliged to read them a lecture on the expediency and the moral grandeur of being neutral.

The instinctive colonialism of American public opinion was balanced by a similarly inconsiderate expression of national self-assertion. The United States was going to penalize Europe for engaging in the war by snatching away many of its existing superiorities. American manufacturers proposed to capture European trade in South America and the Orient. The profits of financing international commerce were to be transferred from London to New York. Fashions for women would be designed on Fifth Avenue rather than the Rue de la Paix. A great national revival in the fine arts would follow a cessation of the importation of painting, sculpture and music. The United States would be thrown back upon its own resources, and then it would show to Europe a full measure of national accomplishment.

When Americans indulge in these expectations they are merely being pursued by the evil spirit of their traditional national delusion—the delusion of isolated newer worldliness. The European war has done nothing except in certain fugitive respects to make them independent of Europe, or to give them an advantage over Europe. Less than ever before will their geographical isolation result in genuine independence. No matter who is victorious, the United States will be indirectly compromised by the treaty of peace. If the treaty is one which makes for international stability and justice, this country will have an interest in maintaining it. If the treaty is one which makes militarism even more ominously threatening, this country will have an interest in seeking a better substitute. Neither will our merchants derive permanent advantages in their own or foreign markets as a result of the war. When it is over, European nations will immediately become both more efficient and more insistent competitors for foreign trade than they were before it began. They will be obliged as a matter of popular subsistence to reconquer and extend their markets. and they will therefore be better organized and equipped for the work. Thus the war has brought with it increasingly numerous and increasingly onerous American national and international obligations.

In its deepest aspect, then, the European war is a challenge to the United States to justify its independence. The nation can not be independent in the sense of being isolated. It can be independent in the sense of being still more completely the master of its own destiny. The control of its own destiny will not mean, as it has done in the past, merely the renunciation of European entanglements, because entanglements will inevitably ensue from the adoption of the positive and necessary policy of making American influence in Europe count in favor of international peace. Neither will the control of its own destiny by the American nation mean, as it has done in the past, its own control by a triumphant prophecy of prosperity. What it will mean is a clearer understanding of the relation between our democratic national ideal and our international obligations, and such an understanding should bring with it a political and economic organization better able to redeem its obligations both to its own citizens and to a regenerate European system.

The Land Question at Aguascalientes

THE action of the Aguascalientes convention in ordering the confiscation of the great Mexican estates and the redistribution of these lands among the peons seems for the moment to introduce a real issue into the conflict in Mexico and to raise that conflict above the plane of a mere jealous strife between rival leaders. It is at least a recognition of the fact that the Mexican malady is economic even more than political. To the average peon it matters little whether the ruler in far-away Mexico City is a Villa, a Carranza, or a Zapata; it is of the utmost importance to him, on the other hand, whether he owns a bit of land or is a semi-servile laborer on an immense estate.

These vast estates constitute an economic problem both grave and difficult. It is difficult because agrarian conditions in Mexico vary from state to state and from district to district. They are not the same in the arid lands of the northern plateau and in the *tierras calientes;* in Chihuahua and in Chiapas; in the stock-raising belt and in the sugar, cacao and indigo districts. In many places there are small agrarian properties. But while the statement so often repeated that less than five hundred persons own all the land in Mexico is grotesquely false, still there exists the crassest inequality in land ownership. There are *haciendas* the size of grand duchies, and there are hundreds of thousands of men landless and without prospect of acquiring land. If ever there is to be the beginning of a hope of an enlightened, progressive, democratic Mexico, this vast disproportion between *hacendados* and peons, between land-owners and land-workers, must be destroyed.

Even though it be not destroyed immediately, the mere fact that this disproportion is being discussed by the assembled generals as Aguascalientes is decidedly significant. It suggests that there is a popular factor in the revolution, even though it be latent. It would be easy to exaggerate this factor. The military leaders are in the main not inspiring or disinterested men, however much they declaim of honor or patriotism. For the most part they seem like posturing dwarfs, strutting over the body of a sleeping giant. The masses of the people, on the other hand, are too lethargic to move or be moved. The majority is illiterate, and a minority consists of roving, naked Indians, ignorant even of Spanish. Much of Mexico is what it was in the days of Humboldt, and much is what it was in the days of Montezuma and Guatemotzin. And yet, as these deliberations at Aguascalientes indicate, a certain ferment is present. New wants, new dissatisfactions, new ideas seep in from beyond the Rio Grande, and where wages rise discontent spreads. The peon who earns thirty cents or twenty or nothing a day is wretched and content; the man in the north who earns his sixty or eighty cents in the mines or on the plantations is open to all sorts of revolutionary propaganda.

To this stirring of a popular imagination, to this rise of a popular interest, as yet in its beginnings, the revolution itself has perhaps contributed. In the main all this fighting is a regression, a reversion to an earlier routine, a backsliding to Bustamante, Santa Anna, and all the inglorious traditions of the heroic age of Mexican brigandage. None the less, for thousands of obscure men the revolution breaks the chain of an ancient submission. By bringing together men from different villages and different states, it helps to destroy ignorance, lethargy and the narrowest localism. It is a hideous tragedy, but it is a way of "seeing Mexico."

If there were no such popular interest, there would be no such discussions as those at Aguascalientes. We should not have Zapata's "plan of Ayala" or Carranza's "plan of Guadalupe." Even were the deliberations a blind, a mere bid for popularity, covering a secret design to transfer estates from rich *Cientificos* to rich Villistas and Zapatistas, still the mere bid for popular support would be the sign of at least some faint popular interest. Even those who selfishly exploit a general discontent become the agents and servants of that discontent.

It is well to listen attentively to whatever is proposed towards the solution of Mexico's gravest economic problem. At the same time it would be absurd to hope too much from these deliberations. The problem is not merely one of subtraction and division. It is far more complex. It is rather the problem of completely altering the economic bases of society, a task comparable in intricacy with that which faced our Southern States after the emancipation of the slaves. In time of peace the mere administrative difficulties of any attempted solution might frustrate the best intentions; in war the obstacles are unsurmountable. And for the moment war seems likely if not inevitable. Even while non-combatant generals debate at Aguascalientes, fighting generals are preparing their soldiers for battle. It is Carranza against the field. Until that issue is decided, until this campaign and perhaps many other campaigns are ended, until some one dominating man or some one coherent group comes to power, it is idle to expect much from any plan of economic reorganization, however well-intentioned.

The Tolerated Unions

WHEN Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., steps forward as a defender of his employees against the union of their trade, and at the same time begins investigations looking to the betterment of general labor conditions, we wonder if there is not danger that the much championed and much investigated wage-earner will not in the end be killed with kindness. The workingman is to be given, not what he wants, but what is good for him. In a period of swift industrial regeneration he himself is to remain inactive and unheard, a mere grateful beneficiary. We note a similar development elsewhere. Factory laws, child labor laws, minimum wage laws, workmen's compensation acts, are hastily inscribed upon the statute book, and philanthropists and politicians lie awake nights contriving new plans of industrial amelioration. But all this goes hand in hand with a more grudging attitude towards trade-unionism, and a keener impatience with what is called the blundering and obstinacy of labor's representatives. Many well-intentioned people come to regard the trade union as obstructive and reactionary, a rigid and therefore dead part of a plastic industrial organism. In short, the union is played out. The labor problem is the first concern of the whole people, but is none of the laborer's business.

The danger of this attitude lies in the tendency to shove the union to one side, to substitute industrial betterment for industrial democracy, and thus to make the good the enemy of the better. The issue is not one between progress and stagnation, for practically all groups desire progress. It is rather the issue of the choice of agents by whom progress is to be made. Behind the conflict of interests there emerges a no less embittered conflict of clashing temperaments. You need only look at the scientific manager and at the trade-union leader to see that these men will not easily mix. The one is objective, quantitative, unemotionally exact, analyzing, stop-watch in hand, the minutest motions of a "personally conducted" day-laborer, as an entomologist studies a bug; the other is laxer, more voluble, more open to emotions that escape stop-watch and measuring rod, less logical, perhaps more real. These two men view the labor world from different vantage-grounds. It is not easy for them to establish a community of sentiment and outlook.

The social reformer frequently displays a similar antagonism to the union. It seems to him selfish, ignorant, inconsistent, harsh. The reformer may not understand the heavy emphasis laid by the union upon the closed shop, upon its own recognition, upon its right to boycott and to strike. He feels that shadowy abstractions are being opposed to solid advantages. He resents the suspicious attitude of labor organizations. Nor does he always understand the union philosophy. The trade unionist is not a college graduate. He does not explain clearly what he feels intensely. He speaks a language different from that of the social reformer. And yet in the course of the years it often happens that the wisdom of the reformer is turned into nonsense and the workman's obscure prejudice is vindicated. Why should a wage-earner object to receiving bonuses and premiums, which are a something added? Why should he oppose piece-rates, which reward each worker according to his ability? Yet decades of pace-setting and price-cutting have conclusively demonstrated the wisdom of trade-union opposition to all such devices. Similarly the trade-union attitude towards compulsory arbitration, the legal incorporation of trade unions, and other plans for industrial lubrication has not seldom been vindicated. What seemed a mere prejudice reveals itself later as a healthy instinct of self-preservation.

It is not that the unions are always right, still less always wise. There are trade union leaders who are only indifferently honest and others who, though incorruptible, are fanatical and formalistic, at once too inexperienced and too narrow-viewed to handle with tactful courage the delicate problems which arise daily. The trade union is a crude young democracy, with the failings and disappointments of a crude young democracy. It also suffers from the evils which inhere in all fighting organizations. It must constantly hold its own. It is, therefore, too slow to see good in the unaccustomed, too prone to view reforms as lures to the unwary. It suffers equally from the fact that it needs stability, and at the same time must adjust itself to an industrial environment constantly changing. It therefore shows strain and cleavage. Jurisdictional conflicts arise, and acrid disputes divide the movement into conservatives and radicals, into "pure and simple" trade unions asking only a fair day's wage, and flaming revolutionary organizations demanding the immediate abolition of the whole capitalist system.

But in truth, despite these internal conflicts, there is both unity and a principle in the movement. Whether the organization be a conservative railroad brotherhood, an industrial union like the coal miners, or a revolutionary industrial union like the Industrial Workers of the World, it is still a union. The varying philosophies are not so significant as the fact that wage-earners stand united for common purposes, for common defense, for common aggression. Whatever their philosophies, their principle is one. And that principle is intensely realistic. The union stands for power, for self-direction, for self-expression in industry, politics and affairs. No specific gain is nearly so important as the power that encompasses it. The unions are seeking to attain to this power through discipline and concert.

It is this very ambition of the union, half conscious and but half realized by its opponents, that gives rise to the opposition and ultimately renders it futile. It is easier to concede favors than to divest one's self of power, easier to increase wages than to surrender control of the shop. Yet in industry as in politics there must come such devolution of authority. Welfare work and all reform from above are valuable, but they are valuable only in so far as they aid and do not obstruct or divert the uneven progress of the wage-earner towards industrial democracy.

Has German Strategy Failed?

AT the close of the third month of the Great War, a month in which all things considered German fortunes have perceptibly waned, it is natural that the question should be raised: Has German strategy failed? Has the strategy of the Allies proved superior?

In the examination of this question it is necessary first of all to indicate that since German armies are still in France, Belgium and Poland, the failure has at most been relative, not absolute, conceivably temporary, certainly not yet to be reckoned permanent. But accepting this qualification, what is to be said of the methods of the great opponents, measured by present achievement?

First of all it is necessary to lay down the conditions of the colossal war game. Bernhardi himself has done this. Thus he wrote: "If Germany is involved in war, she need not recoil before the numerical superiority of her enemies. But so far as human nature is able to tell, she can only rely on being successful if she is absolutely determined to break the superiority of her enemies by a victory over one or the other of them before their total strength can come into action."

In other words, the German problem was to crush France before Russia could come up, or Russia before both France and England had their full strength in the field. Conversely, France, Russia and England were bound to strive to escape defeat in detail, until all three were in full strength.

There is a temptation now to argue that since Germany failed in both her great offensive thrusts, one at Paris, the other at Warsaw, while she has been inexpugnable on the defensive, it would have been wiser to assume the defensive at the outset. On this point Bernhardi is again illuminating. He said: "The defense as a form of fighting is stronger than the attack, but in the conduct of war as a whole, the offensive is by far superior to the defensive, especially in modern warfare." He meant, of course, that Germany, to win the war, must defeat her foes in detail, otherwise industrial paralysis might compel surrender while her frontiers were still unforced, since with England against her, the control of the sea would be lost, and with Russia and France standing with England the ultimate advantage of numbers would also be against her.

Germany was then bound to undertake the offensive. It remained for her general staff to select a method of crushing France before Russia came up. They chose the drive through Belgium. This brought both the British and Belgian armies into the field. Both contributed to German defeat. It may then be argued that it was a mistaken course to follow. But three months after the opening of the war, despite great effort, the Germans have not made a breach in the barrier forts of France.

It seems fair to say, then, that in deciding to go through Belgium, German strategy chose wisely, always viewing the question from the military, not the moral aspect. But having passed through Belgium and penetrated deeply into France, the Germans detached several army corps and sent them to the east before the decisive battle. In something the same situation Frederick the Great sacrificed Berlin and won a great battle which regained his capital. Would William II. have been wiser to have followed the example of his great predecessor?

This point is debatable. British and French commentators insist that the Germans made a grave mistake. But it would be more conclusive to hear what the Russians have to say. Bear in mind that in the last week in August Russian armies were rushing on toward the Vistula, having beaten German armies in East Prussia, and were on the point of routing the whole Austrian military power in Galicia and Poland. Had they been permitted to continue their advance, they were bound to be in Silesia and Posen shortly. Already it was doubtful whether any success then possible in France could counterbalance the great disaster impending in the east.

Accordingly Hindenburg was sent east, where he promptly won the greatest German victory of the war, destroyed one Russian army, and checked the advance to Berlin for two months and more. Again German strategy seems to be beyond just criticism on any available evidence.

Defeated at the Marne and compelled to retire to the Aisne, the Germans promptly changed their plans and endeavored to do in Poland what they had attempted in France. Was this a sound strategical undertaking? Again Bernhardi's declaration stands. It was no longer possible to crush France, but England's million was not yet available, the Allies in the west were not yet in the field in full strength, Russia might conceivably be crushed. Indeed, Hindenburg's great victory held out glowing promise of such a triumph. Were it achieved, German position in France still made a resumption of the advance to Paris almost certainly possible. Meanwhile there was every present indication that if Austria were not promptly relieved, her whole field armies would be destroyed.

In this case, too, then, Germany strategy seems to have taken the wisest course. So far as it is now possible to judge, it failed at least as completely as in France. Was this the final evidence of the superiority of allied strategy? The question is plainly debatable, but it hardly seems conclusive to dispose of it thus.

Is it not fairer to say that German strategy made the best of the conditions imposed upon it by German diplomacy? Thanks to German diplomacy, the German General Staff was compelled to face France, Russia and England in arms. Belgian participation was perhaps the consequence of military action. Given this condition, it did its best, did all and the only things possible.

On the other hand, the Allies, once they were all in the campaign, were bound to have the advantage if they could escape immediate ruin. Their strategy was just as logically imposed upon them as the German upon the Kaiser. All things considered, they played it, if not so brilliantly, with sufficient skill. Looking back now it is possible to see real and remarkable coordination. When Germany struck at France, the French and British retired, but the Russians drove over into East Prussia and compelled the Germans to weaken their offensive in France. When the Germans invaded Poland, it was the Russians who retired, the French and British who stormed up into Flanders.

In sum, looking back over three months of war, what seems impressive is not any real or apparent failure of German strategy, but the unexpected adequacy of Allied strategy. Given the advantage of time, the eventual superiority of numbers, the immediate control of the sea, the Allies could only be defeated decisively in the opening weeks of the war, if they could be brought to battle under exactly the conditions the Germans desired. But German strategy could not impose these conditions upon the Allies, because German resources were not large enough; the statesman had set a task for the soldier beyond his strength. Napoleon with supreme genius failed at the same task in 1814 in his most splendid campaign. Again Bernhardi has the final word. He wrote: "When Napoleon, who so often and so brilliantly had beaten superior numbers with weaker bodies, wanted to enforce victory with an army so much weaker than those of his enemies that even the most famous local victories could no longer change their proportionate numbers, he succumbed, and he was bound to succumb."

Napoleon's failure was absolute, Germany's remains relative. But to argue from failure that the attempt was foolish, even to ascribe superior genius to Allied strategy, is to go beyond the evidence. In 1914 the problem of the Kaiser's generals was that of Napoleon in 1814. In the earlier instance the nearness of success has for all time justified the strategy. The same is fairly to be said of the later experiment, and in neither case was there any conceivable alternative. FRANK H. SIMONDS.

The Empire of the East

THE war in Europe has lasted three months, and it is too soon to say what it is all about. The issues at stake in any war rarely emerge quite clearly until the settlement is in sight. Before the war began, it looked like a madman's dream to make a hecatomb of all the armies of Europe over the grave of the Austrian archduke, very much as the Scythians sacrificed slaves over the dead bodies of their chiefs. In its early weeks it took the dramatic form of a struggle to avenge the violation of Belgian neutrality. It may become, before it is ended, a battle for world empire in which the chief stakes will be distant colonies and "places in the sun."

But one issue behind all these phases will certainly persist. It is a war for the empire of the East. From the Continental standpoint, this struggle is really the postponed sequel of the two Balkan wars. The inner meaning of the original Balkan League has hardly yet been grasped by public opinion in western Europe. When Servia and Bulgaria concluded a secret treaty of alliance in the spring of 1912, under Russian auspices, they had two objects in view. One of these was the liberation of Macedonia from Turkey, primarily for Bulgaria's benefit. The other, which Russia regarded as the chief object, was an attack upon Austria, and the creation of a great Servia at her expense.

I have been told by Balkan diplomatists who had themselves seen the treaty that it provided clearly and precisely for Bulgarian cooperation in such a war. That was not generally known in England and France, but it was well known to the German government. It led to the last menacing increase in the peace effectives of the German army, which were defended at the time as the answer of the German powers to the menace of Pan-Slavism. There followed by way of reply reorganization of the Russian armies, and the return in France to three years' service.

This colossal struggle for the hegemony of the East has been the volcanic foundation of European politics ever since Russia and Austria quarreled over Bosnia in 1909. It has been imminent ever since the Balkan League was founded in 1912. If the war is fought to a clear decision, if either group of powers can master the other, the destinies of the East are sealed. In the one event the German Powers will dominate the Balkans, Turkey and the eastern Mediterranean; in the other it will be a Slavonic hegemony which will stretch from the Adriatic to the Persian Gulf.

It is something of a paradox that with this momentous issue hanging over it, the Balkan Peninsula, outside Servia, is only just beginning to be involved in war. Too many old resentments have stood in the way of a straight pursuit of national interests. Take, for example, the case of Roumania. She has much to gain from the defeat of Austria, for three million Roumanians await impatiently their liberation from the onerous Magyar yoke. It is customary to explain the early inaction of Roumania by the fact that the late King Carol was a Hohenzollern. In vain would he have been born a Hohenzollern had not Russia alienated the sympathies of his subjects. When she rewarded the valor of the Roumanian troops at Plevna by seizing the Roumanian province of Bessarabia, she made of this vigorous little state an almost irreconcilable enemy. She kept the resentment alive by subjecting the Roumanians of Bessarabia to a process of forcible denationalization more ruthless than the Magyars have ever attempted. The reason why Bulgaria has so long held aloof is familiar and recent history. Russia, partly because she has never found in the Bulgarians docile satellites, and partly because her court detests King Ferdinand, allowed and even encouraged the spoliation of Bulgaria in the Treaty of Bucharest. The idea was, of course, to teach the Bulgarians a lesson, and to render King Ferdinand's position intolerable.

It was a rash experiment to play upon a stubborn people. The result is that Servia has had to fight the first round of her hard battle against Austria alone, and that such deep resentment divided Bulgaria and Roumania that it was difficult to conceive any feat of diplomatic finesse which now would avail to bring them together as allies. They have none the less one fundamental instinct in common—the dread of finding their independence overshadowed by the extension of Russian power. It is this dread which has so far kept them neutral. Clearer thinking and a sharper insight into the future might have led them to a somewhat different conclusion. For the one hope of real independence for the Balkan States lies in the prompt and solid reconstitution of the Balkan League, with Roumania as one of its partners.

The hesitation which Turkey has at last overcome needs no interpreter. Of all the many resentments which she cherishes against Christian Powers, the deepest and most permanent is that which she feels against Russia. The sentiment has this justification in calculation, that the gravest menace to her territorial integrity comes from Russian designs upon Armenia. These ambitions, since Russia began to treat her own Armenians well, have now the support of some Armenians and of some influential friends of the Eastern Christians in England. If Turkey could hope to win a success as Germany's ally in some corner of the vast battlefield, she has also before her the alluring prospect of winning Egypt from England.

But there are other considerations which ought to have inspired her with caution. She owed her preservation twice in the last century to Anglo-Russian jealousies. She is probably astute enough to understand that these jealousies, though they may one day revive, have for the moment utterly vanished under the stress of a graver peril. Turkey has been bluntly told that if she goes to war at Germany's bidding, it will be her ruin. What that means in plain words is probably understood at the Porte. It means, as I hear on good authority, that England would no longer oppose or even deprecate the seizure by Russia of Constantinople. She would even assist it. Turkey would not have risked a catastrophe so final as that unless events had suggested to her that Germany is really able to protect her. While she hesitated, she had quite adroitly chosen a partial satisfaction for herself by repudiating the capitulations.

My views on that subject will probably be regarded as heretical by American readers, but I have held them for many years. Some transitional system ought to be arranged; but with this reserve, it seems to me, every instinct of tolerance and liberalism pleads for the abolition of the capitulations. They were a device for stamping a whole race with a sort of legal inferiority. While they lasted, every consulate was an organized insult, every foreign resident a reminder of Christian contempt for Islam. The capitulations have done ten times more evil by fostering Turkish resentment and fanaticism than they have done good by protecting foreign rights. One cannot lift a race by a code of systematic humiliation.

The war will certainly end, if it has any decisive result, in settling the hegemony of the East. The mischief of the modern system of alliances is that it is commonly made workable by a partition of spheres of interest. It is doubtful whether, in the event of a victory for the Triple Entente, the Liberal Powers will exert or seek to exert any great influence on the settlement of the near East. They will incline to respect Russia's province. If English opinion had its way, the iniquitous Treaty of Bucharest would be subjected to drastic revision. Englishmen would welcome the creation of a great Servia and a great Roumania.

But the more one emphasizes the principle of nationality, the more intolerable is it that those who profit by it should themselves defy it. Servia and Roumania both hold, the one in Macedonia and the other at the mouth of the Danube, territory inhabited by Bulgarian people. They hold it, moreover, with a harshness and a disregard of common human rights which overshadows anything in the records of Prussia or of Russia. The Bulgarian church and the Bulgarian language are utterly suppressed, and this Macedonian population, better educated and more advanced than the village population of Servia proper, is held down under martial law, without a pretence of home rule, or so much as an illusory concession of electoral rights. Bulgaria, on the other hand, at once enfranchised even the Turks in her new territories, and has already allowed them to vote.

It is pleasant to express a facile enthusiasm for small nationalities, but for my part I feel that emotion chilled when I reflect that some of these small nationalities are themselves behaving like the largest and oldest of empires. The identity of Albania will probably be preserved by the ambitions of Italy. But one of two things must happen before Macedonia is liberated—either Bulgaria will make her peace with Russia by substituting Prince Boris for King Ferdinand, or else British statesmen must make up their minds to exact some small concession to principle from their Russian ally.

H. N. Brailsford.

The Spirit of Stockholm

SOMEWHERE in Stockholm there is a little park, rather deserted, with some white statues, a fountain and a kiosk. I discovered it first, I remember, two years ago on a hot August day, and I sank then into its green, comforting, silence with a happy sigh of gratitude.

With that same sigh I sink into it again now, here in this city of blue rippling water and green forest. There is a peace here that cannot, I verily believe, be found just now in any other town in Europe. To-morrow I must go on again, but for twenty-four hours at least there will be at my side the spirit of this place, assuring me that the world is just as it used to be—how many ages ago?

On the afternoon that I left Hull the rain came down, a hissing torrent. On the boat we were a cosmopolitan company, two Russians, three Swedes, five Englishmen and a German. We all of us tried to forget that a week earlier the "Runo" had been sunk by a mine, and the captain told us that it would be four days at least before we reached Christiania. We did our best, I am sure, to be pleasant to one another, but we were suspicious and detestably conscious of our German companion. Mines, Louvain, Belgian refugees, Dinant—and here he was, stout, with large spectacles, mild blue eyes, the mouth of a sentimental child, eyeing us now apologetically, now almost fiercely, responding suddenly to some little courtesy on our part, remembering that we were his enemies, and might, had things been otherwise ordered, be at this moment engaged in splitting open his head with a shell. No, it was not pleasant.

On the third day our ship was whirled into a storm, and we were all of us, I think, very ill. I know that Herr S. was horribly indisposed, because I could hear him, from my cabin, calling loudly upon his Fatherland. Rolling upon my own berth, sympathizing daily with him, I knew that in seasickness, at any rate, there are no nationalities.

Then, approaching Christiania, we slipped suddenly into a gray mirror of a sea, above it a sky of smoking, flaming scarlet. Herr S. appreciated deeply its splendour, sighing, wiping his spectacles, seeing in it who knows what "daemmerung" of hopes and placidities and pleasures, all the tranquillity of a contented life, flung at one man's call into limbo. I know that he would have turned and demanded my admiration had we not, of course, been enemies.

In Christiania one was still pursued. The hotel was littered with German newspapers. On every side there are huge headlines, "90,000 Russian Prisoners," "Rising of Natives in India," "Socialist Disaffection in England." The world is thundering at one, "Defeat, defeat, defeat." Seasickness and mines are a poor prelude just now to German newspapers. During my night journey to Stockholm my carriage was invaded by two German gentlemen, who, seeing that I was English, turned on the electric light and discussed German victories with pointed and over-eager volubility. Sleep was nothing to them. They sang their war song until seven of the morning. As the train slipped into the Stockholm station they turned to me, and with an exaggerated bow wished me good-morning.

And here, suddenly, the plague is stayed. I know, sitting in my little green park, that Stockholm has preserved its soul in peace, and is telling me that so I must preserve mine. That is not to say that Stockholm is not interested in the war. Its papers have huge headlines, in many windows there are maps with coloured flags, there are military photographs in the bookshops, and little eager groups of argument at the street corners. Moreover, Sweden is pro-German. Russia, with Finland in its grasp, is too near at home; the Baltic is too narrow. Stockholm is conscious of the war, but the war has not touched its spirit, that remote, beautiful, plangent tranquillity born of the thick forests and the myriad islands and the lakes that are about it.

Between the dark, cool trees of my little park there is a break, and against the blue evening sky a white curving bridge runs. Up and down this bridge little toy figures, moving swiftly, but to me, so far from them, with a remote silence, like coloured marionettes, pass and repass. Those moving figures are all of the living world that I can see, and the evening peace finds its voice in the measured note of a church bell.

To-morrow I cross the Baltic. Already two Swedish steamers have been stopped in their crossing and searched for Englishmen; from one of them thirty Englishmen were politely handed over to the courtesy of German detention. By this time to-morrow I may be a German prisoner, and in any case, if I escape that fate, I shall, in Petrograd, be once more plunged into the whirlpool of the war. Here, for a day, I have been encouraged to believe that the time will surely come when once again the old values, the old friendships, the old sympathies and understandings will assert themselves, that flaming, angry sky above Christiania giving no more the true colours of the picture than the sacking of Louvain represents the normal character of mankind.

Beyond my park there is one of Stockholm's many quays. I cannot see it from where I am sitting, but I can fancy its colours, the piled wooden green trees reflected in the waters of the opposite shore, the blue ferry-boats, the red and black funnels of the steamers. To-morrow once again I shall search the papers for news of the war, shall be alarmed at this rumour and rejoice at that, shall see in the streets of Petrograd the mourning that the women of Russia are wearing for their sons. To-night the little coloured figures dance across the fairy-bridge, the gold of a splendid sunset steals into the dark chequer-board of the trees. . . . They are playing, I see, "Rigoletto" at the Opera House.

HUGH WALPOLE.

The Cotton Crisis

WHEN we denounced the Brazil coffee valorization scheme as an extortionate monopoly, we did not dream that we should within less than three years give serious consideration to a similar scheme for sustaining cotton prices. Still further were we from dreaming that out of the non-interventionist South would arise a movement for the introduction of a method of economic control that may be of more varied and far-reaching possibilities than any now regularly employed by the government. Yet such has been one of the results of the crisis in the cotton trade. Our cotton growers and all the miscellaneous interests based upon cotton production have been placed in a situation analogous with that of the Brazilian coffee producers at the opening of this century. And, political traditions to the contrary notwithstanding, the South is ready to demand governmental intervention of a nature very similar to that which has been employed in Brazil.

Four-fifths of the coffee of the world comes from Brazil; not far from three-fourths of the cotton comes from the United States. In the single Brazilian state of Sao Paolo is produced one-half of the world's supply of coffee; in our own state of Texas, between one-sixth and one-fifth of the world's supply of cotton. The whole economic life of Sao Paolo is bound up with the price of coffee. In the years 1897 and 1898, when coffee sold at an average of sixteen cents, existing plantations prospered and new plantations were laid out at an astonishing rate. In the evil years of the opening century, when coffee dropped as low as 3.55 cents (August, 1903) mortgaged plantations in great numbers fell under the hammer, merchants were ruined and banks failed. No part of our own country, it is true, is specialized to cotton production to the extent that Sao Paolo is specialized to coffee. Nevertheless, twelve-cent cotton means prosperity throughout the South, and six-cent cotton would mean widespread distress, especially in the state of Texas.

The huge coffee crop of 1906-1907 (twenty million bags, as compared with an average crop of twelve millions) forced upon the attention of the Brazilian mercantile community and the state government, the inadequacy of a *laissez-faire* policy in the matter of this chief staple. The present European war, with its attendant disorganization of markets consuming one-third of the world's cotton supply, is producing a similar effect upon American opinion. As was the case in Brazil, it is assumed here that the emergency to be met is temporary, that a restoration of normal conditions cannot be long delayed. The experience of Brazil has proved, however, that such an assumption is fallacious. We might corner the existing supply of cotton and force prices to a high level; but if production goes on unchecked we shall find that the impounding of supplies is a disastrous policy. If the government enters upon a policy of supporting the cotton market with its credit, it will never be able to withdraw without loss unless, like Brazil, it resorts to methods of controlling production.

The Brazilian method of control of the coffee market consists, in the first place, in the warehousing of the existing supply, and the limitation of shipments from the government warehouses to such amounts as will not depress prices unduly. In the second place, shipments on private account are checked by a heavy export duty. By its control of the conditions under which coffee is accepted at the warehouses, the State is able to keep production within bounds. Those who are urging the Federal and State governments to "valorize" cotton overlook the fact that existing constitutional restrictions make it impossible for us to control production through direct State action. It may be constitutional to warehouse the existing supply, and thus postpone the final slump in prices or distribute the loss over several years. But we cannot restrict production through export duties nor, probably, through excises. Accordingly, in so far as the cotton depression is likely to prove chronic unless production is readjusted, we appear to be quite without effective lawful remedies for the evils of the situation. Whatever palliative measures we may adopt, it seems that we must endure the slow and painful process of adjustment through the action of individual producers under the crushing weight of ruinous prices.

Certainly such would be the course of events if we possessed no other means of industrial control than the repressive or the subsidizing activities of the traditional organs of government. But we have in our banking system an unacknowledged governmental organ, perhaps the more potent because it is developing spontaneously to meet the public need. In recent years there have been occasions when banking associations, believing that crops were being held off the market unwisely, have forced more rapid movement through limitations upon credit. The great financial houses have frequently exerted a steadying influence upon industry through restraint upon projects that were designed to inject a cut-throat competition into a situation otherwise satisfactory.

The banks hold the key to the cotton situation. If the banks choose, the area planted to cotton next year can be reduced in such proportion as they may deem wise. The suggestion that they should thus assume control of the industry has already been made in unexpected quarters. Secretary of Agriculture Houston is credited with the proposal that the merchants should lay down the rule that they will not extend advances to any farmer who does not reduce the acreage devoted to cotton, and that the bankers should refuse to lend to merchants who do not impose such restrictions on the farmers.

At first sight it may appear that control of an industry by the banks has absolutely nothing to do with government control. And this is, of course, true in so far as the banks exert control solely with a view to their own private interest. What is proposed by Secretary Houston is that the bankers should go beyond their own interest, and assume control for the good of the cotton growers themselves and of the general community. This would clearly be to assume a governmental function. It is worth noting that it is precisely by this process of assumption of public functions by private interests that new governmental organs are created.

The banker's interest is closely bound up with the general interest of the community, and there is probably no class better fitted than the bankers to undertake the control of industry. Yet the irresponsible exercise of governmental functions by any class, however enlightened and public-spirited, cannot be tolerated by the modern state. Are the bankers, however, in such a position that they may take action without the support of the regularly constituted authorities?

The history of every modern state shows that the higher the degree of banking development, the closer the relation with government. The banks of England, France and Germany are frequently forced by the government to subordinate their private interests to the public welfare. Our own banking system is less highly developed, yet instances of public control are occurring with increasing frequency. We may recall the measures recently employed by the Secretary of the Treasury to check the "hoarding" of money by the banks, and to secure the flotation of the Tennessee loan. If the banks should undertake to regulate the production of such a staple as cotton, we may be sure that the Treasury would proceed to increase correspondingly its control over the banks.

At present the chief source of the influence that the Treasury can exert upon the banks is the discretionary power of deposit of surplus public funds. Such funds fluctuate constantly in volume, and at best are a relatively small item in the accounts of our banking system. But if the government should undertake in earnest to sustain the price of cotton, it would be forced to raise funds to the extent of several hundred millions wherewith to advance credit upon warehoused cotton. The operations thus begun could hardly be closed out without loss, short of several years' time; the sales of cotton from warehouses in the winter and spring would set free public funds that would not be required for sustaining the market until the following season. Such funds in the meantime would be deposited in banks, and by their manipulation the Treasury would be able to dictate to the banks a loan policy in the general interest.

But if the Treasury should thus come to the relief of the cotton growers, and impose regulations upon the industry, may it not at some later time be called upon to "valorize" wheat or fruit or tobacco? Why indeed should it not do this? The alternation of underproduction and overproduction is generally admitted to be an unmitigated evil. In the industrial field it has largely been done away with through consolidation. In the field of staple production, efforts to stabilize the market through mutual agreement between producers have been numerous but unavailing. If stability is desired in this field, there is no simpler method of attaining it than through the control of credit funds by the government, acting through the banks.

Such control would not be confined to repression alone. It would refuse credit for the expansion of an overdeveloped branch of production, but it would also extend credit for the introduction of new branches and for the expansion of those unduly neglected. Its influence would indeed be confined to those producers who depend upon borrowed capital; but these, as the weakest producers, are the ones most likely to follow slavishly the branch of production to which they are accustomed. They are also the ones who suffer most severely from the consequences of overproduction, and would therefore most properly be subjected to control.

ALVIN S. JOHNSON.

The Duty of Harsh Criticism

TO-DAY in England we think as little of art as though we had been caught up from earth and set in some windy side street of the universe among the stars. Disgust at the daily deathbed which is Europe has made us hunger and thirst for the kindly ways of righteousness, and we want to save our souls. And the immediate result of this desire will probably be a devastating reaction towards conservatism of thought and intellectual stagnation. Not unnaturally we shall scuttle for safety towards militarism and orthodoxy. Life will be lived as it might be in some white village among English elms; while the boys are drilling on the green we shall look up at the church spire and take it as proven that it is pointing to God with final accuracy.

And so we might go on very placidly, just as we were doing three months ago, until the undrained marshes of human thought stirred again and emitted some other monstrous beast, ugly with primal slime and belligerent with obscene greeds. Decidedly we shall not be safe if we forget the things of the mind. Indeed, if we want to save our souls, the mind must lead a more athletic life than it has ever done before, and must more passionately than ever practise and rejoice in art. For only through art can we cultivate annoyance with inessentials, powerful and exasperated reactions against ugliness, a ravenous appetite for beauty; and these are the true guardians of the soul.

So it is the duty of writers to deliberate in this hour of enforced silence how they can make art a more effective and obviously unnecessary thing than it has been of late years. A little grave reflection shows us that our first duty is to establish a new and abusive school of criticism. There is now no criticism in England. There is merely a chorus of weak cheers, a piping note of appreciation that is not stilled unless a book is suppressed by the police, a mild kindliness that neither heats to enthusiasm nor reverses to anger. We reviewers combine the gentleness of early Christians with a promiscuous polytheism; we reject not even the most barbarous or most fatuous gods. So great is our amiability that it might proceed from the weakness of malnutrition, were it not that it is almost impossible not to make a living as a journalist. Nor is it due to compulsion from above, for it is not worth an editor's while to veil the bright rage of an entertaining writer for the sake of publishers' advertisements. No economic force compels this vice of amiability. It springs from a faintness of the spirit, from a convention of pleasantness, which, when attacked for the monstrous things it permits to enter the mind of the world, excuses itself by protesting that it is a pity to waste fierceness on things that do not matter.

But they do matter. The mind can think of a hundred twisted traditions and ignorances that lie across the path of letters like a barbed wire entanglement and bar the mind from an important advance. For instance, there is the tradition of unreadability which the governing classes have imposed on the more learned departments of literature, such as biography and history. We must rebel against the formidable army of Englishmen who have achieved the difficult task of becoming men of letters without having written anything. They throw up platitudinous inaugural addresses like wormcasts, they edit the letters of the unprotected dead, and chew once more the more masticated portions of history; and every line they write perpetuates the pompous tradition of eighteenth century "book English" and dissociates more thoroughly the ideas of history and originality of thought. We must dispel this unlawful assembly of peers and privy councillors round the wellhead of scholarship with kindly but abusive, and, in cases of extreme academic refinement, coarse criticism.

That is one duty which lies before us. Others will be plain to any active mind; for instance, the settlement of our uncertainty as to what it is permissible to write about. One hoped, when all the literary world of London gave a dinner to M. Anatole France last year, that some writer would rise to his feet and say: "Ladies and gentlemen, we are here in honor of an author who has delighted us with a series of works which, had he been an Englishman, would have landed him in gaol for the term of his natural life." That would have shown *that the fetters of the English artist* are not light and may weigh down the gestures of genius. It is not liberty to describe love that he needs, for he has as much of that as any reasonable person could want, so much as the liberty to describe this and any other passion with laughter and irony.

This enfranchisement must be won partly by criticism. We must ridicule those writers who supply the wadding of the mattress of solemnity on which the British governing classes take their repose. We must overcome our natural reverence for Mrs. Humphry Ward, that grave lady who would have made so excellent a helpmate for Marcus Aurelius, and mock at her succession of rectory Cleopatras of unblemished character, womanly women who, without education and without the discipline of participation in public affairs, are yet capable of influencing politicians with wisdom. When Mr. A. C. Benson presents the world with the unprovoked exudations of his temperament, we may rejoice over the Hindu-like series of acquiescences which take the place of religion in donnish circles. The whole of modern England is busily unveiling itself to the satirist and giving him an opportunity to dispute the reverences and reticence it has ordained.

But there is a more serious duty than these before us, the duty of listening to our geniuses in a disrespectful manner. Criticism matters as it never did in the past, because of the present pride of great writers. They take all life as their province to-day. Formerly they sat in their studies, and thinking only of the emotional life of mankind—thinking therefore with comparative ease, of the color of life and not of its form—devised a score or so of stories before death came. Now, their pride telling them that if time would but stand still they could explain all life, they start on a breakneck journey across the world. They are tormented by the thought of time; they halt by no event, but look down upon it as they pass, cry out their impressions, and gallop on. Often it happens that because of their haste they receive a blurred impression or transmit it to their readers roughly and without precision. And just as it was the duty of the students of Kelvin the mathematician to correct his errors in arithmetic, so it is the duty of critics to rebuke these hastinesses of great writers, lest the blurred impressions weaken the surrounding mental fabric and their rough transmissions frustrate the mission of genius on earth.

There are two great writers of to-day who greatly need correction. Both are misleading in external things. When Mr. Shaw advances, rattling his long lance to wit, and Mr. Wells follows, plump and oiled with the fun of things, they seem Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. Not till one has read much does one discover that Mr. Shaw loves the world as tenderly as Sancho Panza loved his ass, and that Mr. Wells wants to drive false knights from the earth and cut the stupidity and injustice out of the spiritual stuff of mankind. And both have to struggle with their temperaments. Mr. Shaw believes too blindly in his own mental activity; he imagines that if he continues to secrete thought he must be getting on. Mr. Wells dreams into the extravagant ecstasies of the fanatic, and broods over old hated things or the future peace and wisdom of the world, while his story falls in ruins about his ears.

Yet no effective criticism has come to help them. Although in the pages of Mr. Shaw enthusiasm glows like sunsets and the heart of man is seen flowering in a hundred generous and lovely passions, no one has ever insisted that he was a poet. We have even killed his poetry with silence. A year ago he lightened the English stage, which has been permanently fogged by Mr. Pinero's gloomy anecdotes about stockbrokers' wives and their passions, with "Androcles and the Lion," which was a miracle play and an exposition of the Christian mysteries. It taught that the simple man is the son of God, and that if men love the world it will be kind to them. Because this message was delivered with laughter, as became its optimism, English criticism accused Mr. Shaw of pertness and irreverence, and never permitted the nation to know that a spiritual teacher had addressed it. Instead, it advised Mr. Shaw to return to the discussion of social and philosophical problems, in which his talent could perhaps hope to be funny without being vulgar.

Mr. Wells' mind works more steadily than Mr. Shaw's, but it suffers from an unawareness of the reader; an unawareness, too, of his material; an unawareness of everything except the problem on which it happens to be brooding. His stories become more and more absent-minded. From "The Passionate Friends" we deduced that Mr. Wells lived on the branch line of a not too well organized railway system and wrote his books while waiting for trains at the main line junction. The novel appeared to be a year book of Indian affairs; but there were also some interesting hints on the publishing business, and once or twice one came on sections of a sympathetic study of moral imbecility in the person of a lady called Mary, who married for money and impudently deceived her owner. And what was even more amazing than its inchoateness was Mr. Wells' announcement on the last page that the book had been a discussion of jealousy. That was tragic, for it is possible that he had something to say on the subject, and what it was no one will ever know. Yet this boat of wisdom which had sprung so disastrous a leak received not one word of abuse from English criticism. No one lamented over the waste of the mind, the spilling of the idea.

That is what we must prevent. Now, when every day the souls of men go up from France like smoke, we feel that humanity is the flimsiest thing, easily divided into nothingness and rotting flesh. We must lash down humanity to the world with thongs of wisdom. We must give her an unsurprisable mind. And that will never be done while affairs of art and learning are decided without passion, and individual dulnesses allowed to dim the brightness of the collective mind. We must weepingly leave the library if we are stupid, just as in the middle ages we left the home if we were lepers. If we can offer the mind of the world nothing else we can offer it our silence.

REBECCA WEST.

Panic In Art

ONCE a year for the last six years art has been reborn and named successively: Post-Impressionism, Cubism, Futurism, Orphism, Synchromism and Vorticism. And each conception is assumed to have the finality of a miracle. In the uproar of rival christenings the accredited Cubist pamphleteer announces "Cubism is painting itself." The Futurist manifesto proclaims, "We inaugurate a new epoch of painting." A Synchromist confided to me, "Ours is the last painters' movement; there can be no other." One conviction, however, they hold in common: art, which has been the courtesan of princes and the holiday playmate of republics, is dead. Painting, which began with Giotto, has completed its cycle, and a new art made possible by a new freedom is to begin.

We are faced with it, the freedom to paint hair green, thighs blue, and tables out of perspective; the further freedom to dismember any object and scatter its parts in dynamic rhythm; the ultimate right to evolve whirlpools of color splashed by flaming pinwheels in which the last traces of the object is inundated. The critic attempts to bully the painter by declaring this stuff is not worth understanding. The painter promptly intimidates the critic by declaring that this is beauty too new and too strange for him to see.

Now it is essential to realize that not even the maddest of modern canvasses is a hoax nor the strangest a mystery. For in this new movement there is nothing mysterious we need approach with awe. Nothing is hidden except its motives. It is not primarily a revolt against the realism of Courbet or the impressionism of Monet. The energy that animates it is nothing so trivial as a desire to scandalize the pontiffs of academic art. The new in recent art is the expression of two impulses, the first a panic-stricken attempt (Post-Impressionism) to recover our lost innocence of the eye, the second (Cubism, Futurism, etc.) a frantic endeavor to achieve forms so pure and beauty so abstract that they would be a new absolute. Both are ineffectual and both are significant because they are phases of an inevitable revolt against an unavoidable criticism growing every year more intolerable to the artist.

For the compilation of art history has grown so complete that no one can escape it. The process of enthusiastic allegiance to some historic type of beauty by which the artist educates his sense of design and form becomes an immense critical labor. Instead of an immediate native tradition there is a bewildering array of historic tradition to choose from. The sculptor, for instance, not only compares Greek statues with Egyptian, Hindu bronzes with Chinese monuments, but he must compare Phidian marbles with archaic Attic bas-reliefs, and later Egyptian monoliths with examples of the first dynasties. He cannot take Greek art in general, or any other art, as his model; his knowledge of it is already too complete. Forty years ago the mere sight of the first Japanese prints to reach Europe determined Whistler's sense of composition, Van Gogh's draughtsmanship, Monet's secession from the Barbizon School. But already the painter knows that Hokusai and Hiroshighe are decadent and merely popular illustrators to the Japanese themselves, and that if he wishes to school himself in Oriental art he had better learn to appreciate Harunobu or the Chinese landscape paintings of the Sung period, unless he finds that the Orient after all reached a more complete expression in Persian miniatures. The creative energy of our time is not only exhausted by enthusiastic erudition, but our power of appreciation is itself drained by incessant criticism, the necessity for a continual revaluation of all aesthetic values before we can achieve any aesthetic criterion whatsoever.

Is it surprising that painters and sculptors ended with a forlorn sense of the wisdom of ignorance, that, utterly weary of the burden of sophistication, their only ultimate enthusiasm should be for every primitive period of art in which they could regain a sense of seeing with the uneducated gaze of the savage and the childlike eye? There followed ten or fifteen years in which every type of primitive simplicity was revived: the simplification of drawing, the distortion of the nude, the color schemes of pure reds, blues and yellows which raised shrieks of protest. The sculptor discovered negro wood-carvings of the African coast and "went in" for a barbaric feeling for form. Portraits were painted which had the ponderous strength of Byzantine mosaics, every feature heavily outlined in black. Landscapes became patterns as simple and direct as Persian tiles.

As in all revivals, much was recovered that was permanently valuable. Color achieved a new splendor. Painting acquired an intrinsic beauty of material, a sheer loveliness of texture, as of lustreless enamel or Italian majolica. Our sense of decoration was reborn. For any canvas of Matisse more genuinely ornaments a wall than a mural painting by Chavannes. All the elements for the making of a great tradition of mural painting were resurrected, but painting was too irretrievably obsessed with its search for salvation to use them. The nostalgia of eclecticism remained, while the conviction grew more and more irresistible that everything had been done and there was no use doing it over again. The ingenuity of the artist was finally browbeaten. The visible world was no longer real to him. Significantly enough, Picasso, collector of death-masks and totem-poles, was the first to emancipate himself from the object.

So we have had the rise of five or six "Damn-the-Object" schools. The cubists proclaim, "The mission of the artist is to divest objects of their banal appearance and to fashion the real image of the spirit." The painter is to search for "the plastic essence of the world," tending to express itself as "a colored mathematics of things." Observe the absolutist's contempt for the merely phenomenal world. Objects are appearances, thin and unreal things. Vision is only a form of illusion; reality is elsewhere. The artist pondering on the nature of his art begins to reflect on the nature of reality. And with phenomenal ingenuity he creates fantastic systems of graphic symbols to express naive systems of metaphysics. The cubists are particularly preoccupied with the nature of space and volume, and though they insist that "pictorial space" is "non-euclidian," they express their conviction in canvasses full of cones, cylinders and cubes. The futurist parodies Democritus: "Our bodies enter into the canopies on which we sit, the couches enter into our bodies, the autobus hurls itself into the houses it passes, the houses hurl themselves upon the autobus and merge with it."

The second revolution, like the first, ends in the past. The revolutionary painter, seeking the most uniquely modern goal he can imagine, has fallen victim to an ancient hunger—a poetic impatience to rend the veil of appearance, a poignant eagerness to be one with the hidden essence of being. He has expressed again his own weariness, a desire to lose himself in a world his eye can no longer dominate or understand. The latest pamphlet calls this "The Art of Spiritual Harmony." Well, it is an essentially mediaeval conception of the relation of man to his universe. It is a scholastic's answer to the problem, though the middle ages did not attempt to delineate it in paint. The cubist and the futurist are at best modern monks illuminating with fantastic grotesques the margin of an esoteric manuscript. And if certain of their canvasses of triangles and circles seem like cabalistic signs, it is because, like Faust, they are calling up the Earth-Spirit.

Yet there is no need of echoing Kenyon Cox that painting is going to the dogs, or of whimpering with all the instructors that art is dead. Whatever you may mean by death, be certain of one thing: Art may die innumerable deaths, if that is the metaphor you choose to adopt. It will not stop. The twin impulse to ornament and to play is an eternal passion. This kneading, thumping, hammering, cutting and smearing of materials into shapes and patterns is an incessant energy, and the habit of making easel pictures is only one of its phases. For the moment, painting is sealed in a test-tube of aesthetic experiments where form and color gleam and float in fiery disintegration.

L. S.

The War and the Future of Civilization

THE defense alleged by all the nations at present involved in the European war hinges upon the necessity of their continued existence to insure the future of civilization. Nor can we claim with a shadow of truth that the insistence upon this point is more vigorous at Berlin than it is in London or in Paris. We shall surely be lacking in fairness if we question the sincerity with which all these European nations tenaciously cling to the notion that they are indispensable to the happiness of future generations. We shall, however, be quite as lacking in candor and intelligence if we fail to see that each of these nations assumes a knowledge of the ultimate end and aim of civilization, coupled to a clear insight into the process by which that ultimate aim must be attained, to an ability to see the chain of connection binding the present to this dim and ultimate future, and, of course, to an analysis of the present situation so complete and accurate as to distinguish the elements necessary to insure the future.

We find it personally a little difficult to concede to any of the nations the gift of prophecy and an ability to read the writing in the stars. Can we be absolutely positive that the future of the human race, let us say, depends upon the ruling of Asia, Africa, or South America by any European nation? In the face of the fact that every religious creed which has shown any strength in history has come out of Asia, can we believe that upon the direction of the occidental nations depends the spiritual progress of the human race? We find in Europe at present two different notions of administration; one called parliamentary government, and the other bureaucratic government. The one works admirably in England, and rather badly elsewhere; the other is astonishingly efficient in Germany, and less conspicuously useful in other countries. Shall we not really need the powers of a seventh son to tell which of these is more essential to the world at large? We find in England a notion of individual liberty which, on the whole, allows the individual to do pretty much anything he wants to until some other individual sues him in court. The government is to arbitrate between the two, but is to direct neither. In Germany the government promulgates sets of rules regarding the conduct of individuals toward each other, and compels individuals to observe them. The citizens of both nations claim that the results are as nearly ideal as anything is likely to be in this imperfect world.

If we look into the past, we shall find it difficult to concede to any generation the ability to tell in advance what will benefit or will injure civilization. The downfall of political Greece, which seemed to many contemporaries certain to destroy Greek culture forever, was in fact the instrumentality by which Greek culture was spread throughout the civilized world and made almost universal. Scarcely a Roman citizen could have been found in the fourth century, A.D., who would not have bewailed the invasions of the "barbarous" Germans as the death of civilization. Indeed, educated men were pretty positive for nearly a thousand years that the Barbarians had destroyed civilization. Of this the Renaissance had no doubt whatever, and named the centuries subsequent to the fall of Rome and previous to their own time as the dark ages, when the light of civilization had been quenched. It is an astonishingly different notion of the Barbarian invasions which we find in the pages of ardent Teutonists like Lamprecht or Chamberlain. They are quite convinced that those centuries saw the dawn of civilization. In 1630 Gustavus Adolphus arrived in Germany for the purpose of saving civilization, which he identified with Protestantism, yet he succeeded (as most authorities are now agreed) in wrecking and desolating Germany, and he was certainly one of the chief authors of her poverty and weakness in the two succeeding centuries. Nor do we see at present eye to eye with the savior of civilization in 1815. Louis XVIII and the Duke of Wellington now occupy quite unenviable positions as blind reactionaries in the path of progress, while for those masters of foreign politics, George Canning and Metternich, whose policies and speeches impressed their contemporaries as utterances divinely inspired, we have scarcely a respectful word. Yet in 1815 there was probably no individual whom his contemporaries would have considered sane who did not breathe fervent prayers of thanks in the belief that the future of civilization was now assured, having passed into the hands of its saviors.

Do we not also learn from the history of the past that it is almost impossible for contemporaries to judge correctly in deciding whether resistance to aggression is really a safeguard for the future or merely an attempt of the obsolete and the outworn to retard progress? Few men would now shed tears upon the remains of political Athens; still fewer bemoan the sowing of salt upon the ruins of Carthage. A cold and unsympathetic reception awaits the advocate of the usefulness of imperial Rome of the fourth century A.D. There can be absolutely no doubt that the monasteries rendered indispensable service to the cause of civilization in the early middle ages, not only by the preservation of art and letters, but by the preservation of technical skill in many mechanical trades. But in the sixteenth century the monastic orders had no friends sufficiently ardent and powerful to ward off destruction, and there are not many students to-day who are inclined to question the general gain for civilization by the breaking of their power.

Surely, if in the whole range of history we come upon a country which believed its own efforts indispensable for the progress of the race, it was Renaissance Italy, and it was more nearly right than contemporaries usually have been; but the political power of Italy was then, and remained until the nineteenth century, a shadow. Few countries in the whole history of the race have achieved such wholehearted and unanimous admiration as France possessed in the eighteenth century. Its very name was synonymous with what was to contemporaries civilization itself; its loss or destruction would have seemed irreparable. Yet in 1815 practically the whole civilized world congratulated itself upon the downfall, nay, upon the practical destruction of France, and upon the consequent saving of civilization.

If there is anything in the tenet of the relativity of truth, we have not now and are not likely to have any notion of what is really indispensable to the future of civilization, because we have not and cannot have a definite notion of what the future of civilization is. It ought to be sufficient for us to remember that northwestern Europe, which we now look upon as the seat of civilization, was, at the birth of Christ, scarcely known to be upon the globe, and was in all honesty believed by scientists to be the place where the world came to an end and space began. And in the history of the race and of the world two thousand years are but a moment. In reality we are dealing to-day with essentially different notions of civilization, of its object, of the methods necessary to attain it, of the hands which will perform the work. It is the difference of opinion about the future which lies at the root of the present difficulty, and in that opinion we shall find, as in a looking-glass, the images of the nations as they successively step forward. They differ in their national character, their ideas of morality, their ideas of the future because of their past. Their national aims and ambitions are the result of the history of Europe, the result of their deep hatreds, antagonisms, and rivalries during the fifteen hundred years since their ancestors poured down from the forests of the North upon the provinces of decadent Rome. From such a long and tangled past have come deep-rooted ideas, intense passions, strong beliefs, determinations to prevail. It is with these we have to deal.

Somehow, in some way of which we know nothing, the future civilization will emerge, as in the past, from the clash of these ideals and ambitions. The past makes it clear that civilization will be safeguarded, whatever happens. The future no more depends upon a single race or a single nation than a nation depends upon a single individual. When we talk of worlds, of aeons of time, of the human race itself and the future of its civilization, nations, like individuals, become pygmies and almost disappear from sight. We cannot tell in advance what the future is going to be, we cannot tell in advance which of us will render the service which will be seen a thousand years hence to have been important; but surely we can all be pardoned for believing that we have some part to play in it. The real problem with which we have to deal is not that of providing for civilization's future, but that of providing for the immediate future of those of us who are now alive.

ROLAND G. USHER.

In a Schoolroom

THE other day I amused myself by slipping into a recitation at the suburban high school where I had once studied as a boy. The teacher let me sit, like one of the pupils, at an empty desk in the back of the room, and for an hour I had before my eyes the interesting drama of the American school as it unfolds itself day after day in how many thousands of classrooms throughout the land. I had gone primarily to study the teacher, but I soon found that the pupils, after they had forgotten my presence, demanded most of my attention.

Their attitude towards the teacher, a young man just out of college and amazingly conscientious and persevering, was that good-humored tolerance which has to take the place of enthusiastic interest in our American school. They seemed to like the teacher and recognize fully his good intentions, but their attitude was a delightful one of all making the best of a bad bargain, and co-operating loyally with him in slowly putting the hour out of its agony. This good-natured acceptance of the inevitable, this perfunctory going through by its devotees of the ritual of education, was my first striking impression, and the key to the reflections that I began to weave.

As I sank down to my seat I felt all that queer sense of depression, still familiar after ten years, that sensation, in coming into the schoolroom, of suddenly passing into a helpless, impersonal world, where expression could be achieved and curiosity asserted only in the most formal and difficult way. And the class began immediately to divide itself for me, as I looked around it, into the artificially depressed like myself, commonly called the "good" children, and the artificially stimulated, commonly known as the "bad," and the envy and despair of every "good" child. For to these "bad" children, who are, of course, simply those with more self-assertion and initiative than the rest, all the careful network of discipline and order is simply a direct and irresistible challenge. I remembered the fearful awe with which I used to watch the exhaustless ingenuity of the "bad" boys of my class to disrupt the peacefully dragging recitation; and behold, I found myself watching intently, along with all the children in my immediate neighborhood, the patient activity of a boy who spent his entire hour in so completely sharpening a lead-pencil that there was nothing left at the end but the lead. Now what normal boy would do so silly a thing or who would look at him in real life? But here, in this artificial atmosphere, his action had a sort of symbolic quality; it was assertion against a stupid authority, a sort of blind resistance against the attempt of the schoolroom to impersonalize him. The most trivial incident assumed importance; the chiming of the town-clock, the passing automobile, a slip of the tongue, a passing footstep in the hall, would polarize the wandering attention of the entire class like an electric shock. Indeed, a large part of the teacher's business seemed to be to demagnetize, by some little ingenious touch, his little flock into their original inert and static elements.

For the whole machinery of the classroom was dependent evidently upon this segregation. Here were these thirty children, all more or less acquainted, and so congenial and sympathetic that the slightest touch threw them all together into a solid mass of attention and feeling. Yet they were forced, in accordance with some principle of order, to sit at these stiff little desks, equidistantly apart, and prevented under penalty from communicating with each other. All the lines between them were supposed to be broken. Each existed for the teacher alone. In this incorrigibly social atmosphere, with all the personal influences playing around, they were supposed to be, not a network or a group, but a collection of things, in relation only with the teacher.

These children were spending the sunniest hours of their whole lives, five days a week, in preparing themselves, I assume by the acquisition of knowledge, to take their places in a modern world of industry, ideas and business. What institution, I asked myself, in this grown-up world bore resemblance to this so carefully segregated classroom? I smiled, indeed, when it occurred to me that the only possible thing I could think of was a State Legislature. Was not the teacher a sort of Speaker putting through the business of the session, enforcing a sublimated parliamentary order, forcing his members to address only the chair and avoid any but a formal recognition of their colleagues? How amused, I thought, would Socrates have been to come upon these thousands of little training-schools for incipient legislators! He might have recognized what admirably experienced and docile Congressmen such a discipline as this would make, if there were the least chance of any of these pupils ever reaching the House, but he might have wondered what earthly connection it had with the atmosphere and business of workshop and factory and office and store and home into which all these children would so obviously be going. He might almost have convinced himself that the business of adult American life was actually run according to the rules of parliamentary order, instead of on the plane of personal intercourse, of quick interchange of ideas, the understanding and the grasping of concrete social situations.

It is the merest platitude, of course, that those people succeed who can best manipulate personal intercourse, who can best express themselves, whose minds are most flexible and most responsive to others, and that those people would deserve to succeed in any form of society. But has there ever been devised a more ingenious enemy of personal intercourse than the modern classroom, catching, as it does, the child in his most impressionable years? The two great enemies of intercourse are bumptiousness and diffidence, and the classroom is perhaps the most successful instrument yet devised for cultivating both of them.

As I sat and watched these interesting children struggling with these enemies, I reflected that even with the best of people, thinking cannot be done without talking. For thinking is primarily a social faculty; it requires the stimulus of other minds to excite curiosity, to arouse some emotion. Even private thinking is only a conversation with one's self. Yet in the classroom the child is evidently expected to think without being able to talk. In such a rigid and silent atmosphere, how could any thinking be done, where there is no stimulus, no personal expression?

While these reflections were running through my head, the hour dragged to its close. As the bell rang for dismissal, a sort of thrill of rejuvenation ran through the building. The "good" children straightened up, threw off their depression and took back their self-respect, the "bad" sobered up, threw off their swollen egotism, and prepared to leave behind them their mischievousness in the room that had created it. Everything suddenly became human again. The brakes were off, and life, with all its fascinations of intrigue and amusement, was flowing once more. The school streamed away in personal and intensely interested little groups. The real world of business and stimulations and rebounds was thick again here.

If I had been a teacher and watched my children going away, arms around each other, all aglow with talk, I should have been very wistful for the injection of a little of that animation into the dull and halting lessons of the classroom. Was I a horrible "intellectual," to feel sorry that all this animation and verve of life should be perpetually poured out upon the ephemeral, while thinking is made as difficult as possible, and the expressive and intellectual child made to seem a sort of monstrous pariah?

Now I know all about the logic of the classroom, the economies of time, money, and management that have to be met. I recognize that in the cities the masses that come to the schools require some sort of rigid machinery for their governance. Hand-educated children have had to go the way of handmade buttons. Children have had to be massed together into a schoolroom, just as cotton looms have had to be massed together into a factory. The difficulty is that, unlike cotton looms, massed children make a social group, and that the mind and personality can only be developed by the freely inter-stimulating play of minds in a group. Is it not very curious that we spend so much time on the practice and methods of teaching, and never criticise the very framework itself? Call this thing that goes on in the modern schoolroom schooling, if you like. Only don't call it education. RANDOLPH S. BOURNE.

A Change in Shaw

Pygmalion, a romance in five acts, by G. Bernard Shaw. Presented at the Park Theatre, New York, Oct. 12, 1914.

IF a play has breath in its body, it lives outside as well as inside the theatre. Tragedy or fantasy, comedy or farce, it goes with us from the footlights to the street. It may fade, like a glance of understanding. It may be forgotten, like a sympathy outlived. But however fleeting its impression, it must, if it is to withstand criticism, persuade us that its allegiance is to life. It must, that is to say, survive the mere galvanic hour. Like true eloquence in the orator, it must abide the morning after, in a world without glamor or enthrallment. And it will abide if it has awakened within ourselves that sanction to which dramatic method is simply the vivid aid.

Bernard Shaw has, of course, been singularly a dramatist of life. He has been blamed for using his characters as mouthpieces, and for decoying them merely to surprise or amuse us. The criticism is fair, in so far as he has served his purpose at the expense of his characters' individuality. People in real life are never entirely like people in Shavian plays. Their motives are not so exact. Their emotions are not so amusingly meretricious. Their language is not so pellucidly logical. But where Shaw touches reality is in his dramatization of conventions and codes. It is easy for us now to believe that we came honestly by our own mental receptivity, but a whole theatric generation has had the benefit of the sharpest critical intelligence of his age. Shaw received English-speaking audiences into a theatre cloyed with sentiment and muffled in tradition. He found them full of precious assumptions about character and circumstance to which it was the constant habit to defer. He sent people home with a new sense of their own principles and prejudices, as if they had endured a healthy though uninvited dispute. He gave to current morals a different and vastly more intelligible meaning, and did it through the challenged mind rather than through the mobile heart. He has, at any rate, up to the present, always raised expectancies as to social intention and perception which, despite any flippancy of situation, he has never failed exuberantly to fulfil.

Up to the present, however; for "Pygmalion" marks a sharp and vital change. A thing to see, it is also a thing to laugh with and enjoy, a comedy of quite diverting skill. Coming from success in Germany and England, it is already established here as one of our most inviting plays. But, facile in the theatre, laying springes for our laughter, it expires with the tenancy of one's chair.

Consider, first, the slightness of "Pygmalion." The scene is darkest London. At its center, huddled in a rainstorm under the gaunt portico of St. Paul's in Covent Garden, sits a flower-girl, the trampled lily of Cockaigne. To this guttersnipe, in the midnight shower, comes a brusque, fraternal gentleman, the man of hard words and gentle deeds. But, unlike his counterpart in "The Unsocial Socialist," this is a practical reformer, a phonetic expert, a wizard in vocables. In a few months, he muses loudly, he could give the guttersnipe the articulation and the soul of a duchess. Convert her speech, convert her manners—she'll be a lady as good as any in the land. He surveys her broodingly, thrusts a banknote on her, scowls at thanks, and disappears.

Something in this girl answers the clarion of Henry Higgins. She arrives next day to hire, with his own bounty, his magic aid. He accepts her, but with consequences. Her father pursues, a crafty, jocular soul, minstrel of "the undeserving poor." For another banknote, however, he leaves his plastic girl to Henry Higgins, departing with a frank, unchristian wink. Eliza is thereupon washed, scrubbed and put in the forcing-bed, to be gingerly transplanted, after three months, for the social scrutiny of a Chelsea flat. Eliza acts the human pianola to her master's anguish and delight. He next ordains a garden party, a Gethsemane, and here Eliza triumphs. The trick is accomplished, she's a lady, a penniless, beautiful woman on the professor's bachelor hands. He storms at the problem Eliza now presents, and she, passionately human, hates him for loving him. They exchange "brute" and "liar," create a situation, fly asunder, and later, after a burlesque frenzied chase, unite. The union is deferred for the reappearance of Eliza's father, now endowed by a funny-column American millionaire, and converted into a funny-column social reformer. The father departs, to point a skit on the ascent to marriage via property, leaving Henry Higgins to expound Shaw's favorite crux, "I can't live with her, and I can't live without her."

Here, then, is a fantasy of gossamer texture, requiring for its reality a wealth of humor, of sympathy, of art. It is almost as if Shaw had been allured by the winsome muse of J. M. Barrie, only to be deserted, poor victim of inveterate intelligence, the moment that Eliza left her slum. It is not Eliza that is at fault, but the arid sympathy of Shaw. Forced, for lack of realizing her warm and touching possibilities, to see her as purely comic, Shaw had to make people respond by methods invented for the stage. She is bribed with chocolates and silks, and her bribery makes us laugh. She bewilders the stage housekeeper, and we smile. She upsets the "silly ass" at a British afternoon tea, and we grin. She ejects "bloody," and we roar. We are then prepared for excruciating references to the "pre-digested cheese trust," speeches on "middle class morality" and fortunes juggled to suit theatric needs. But all the time we imagine a real Eliza, unlike this comic butt, who would have justified a very different mirth.

Farce, perhaps, is also worth our while. But one judges this is accidental farce. As comedy, at any rate, it is spurious. Shaw has stooped to fabricate a play. It is only fair, however, to ascribe some of this delinquency to the cast. It is hard to believe that any part could have survived the conscientious over-acting of Mr. Merivale as the professor. He kept jumping on imagination's toes. Mr. Edmund Gurney, on the other hand, awakened delighted appreciation as Eliza's father. If he captivated every soul in the theatre, it was by richest reference to life. I felt sorry when Mr. Gurney returned in the last act. He was set to spur a very jaded muse.

But if Mr. Gurney was the gem, Mrs. Campbell was the high and radiant star. Of autumn—if stars are seasonal—there was no more than the faintest sigh in her performance. Forbidden by the dramatist any excursion into her own opulent and seductive regions, she exquisitely declined to adapt Eliza Doolittle to her personal proclivities. Without verve, but with enveloping skill, she attained utter fidelity to the Cockney wench. As the flower-girl, the bullied pupil, the phonetic doll, the eventual woman—from seed to bud and bud to flower—she was fully and beautifully resourceful. In that part one might yearn to see a young creature of such pulsing humanity that one would turn to her for the poignancy of her springtime and the wonder of awakening sex. Yet here is a triumph without a single adventitious aid. Incidentally, Mrs. Campbell's voice was memorably lovely. There is for everyone a cadence in words like "moon" and "swoon," but never, never was any phrase so cadent as her Galatea's fluted "drop of booze."

FRANCIS HACKETT.

Books and Things

ALL writers, according to Anatole France, are condemned to solitary confinement. I quote from the English edition of "La Vie Litteraire": "We are shut up in our own personality as if in a perpetual prison. The best thing for us, it seems to me, is to admit this frightful condition with a good grace, and to confess that we speak of ourselves every time we have no strength to remain silent." A friend of mine, a rival of Mr. A. B. Walkley in his devotion to these words, has embroidered upon them after this fashion, which he calls "Magnum Opus":

> My book is of the past. A shadow falls,
> Blue, Greek, serene, across this Attic page.
> In this, a murmur of the Middle Age
> Echoes and dies along Italian walls.
>
> My book is of the present. Young Love's wings.
> He loves, she loves. "O, let him marry her!"
> Softly, I pray. The wedding will occur
> After he's busted a few trusts and things.
>
> My book is of the future. Here on earth
> Both sexes travel their eugenic way
> To Heaven, and sex war has its day.
> The story closes with my hero's birth.
>
> All these my subject. On an upper shelf
> It hides, my dusty duodecimo.
> I never read it. It contains, you know,
> A hundred thousand words about—myself.

A good war poem, whenever anybody writes one, will be welcome, but I can't understand disdain of the war poetry that has already found its way to the United States. Most of it is merely claret on the tablecloth and the kindest criticism is a pinch of salt. Many of the poets are now in the trenches. Neither they nor the stay-at-homes have had time to shape imaginatively such material as the war has brought them. Conceive, if you please, some planet where disobedient water flowed uphill, where the goodness of God was apprehended by the devout as flushing the universe at certain seasons only, where the flesh of men fell off their bones in autumn, and skeletons walked the winter until spring. I should hardly expect my favorite poet, if transported thither, to supply me at once with an imaginative reaction upon a planet so peculiar. At first he could not listen to the music of the sphere on which he was marooned. He would be too intent upon making sense out of the libretto. Let us, therefore, deal gently with poets whom patriotic impulse or a noble, unintelligent aspiration to be worthy of a great moment, has too early set to work. The war is not yet a subject, except for the rhetoricians. Some day it will find its great poet. I am content to wait for this day, unless the great poet, by not being born yet, keep me waiting too long.

I trust I haven't implied that taking his time insures a writer against the rhetorical danger. Paul Hervieu, you may remember, was profoundly disorganized by the Dreyfus case. For two years he could do no work. The idea of guilt haunted him. A crime of one kind or another had been committed and the guilt had not been fixed. He was cured of his distraction at last by writing "L'Enigme," one of the Dreyfus case's queerest by-products. In its first form the play ended without giving up its secret. It did not tell us which of the two wives, *Giselle* or *Leonore,* had been guilty of adultery. We found this out in the second version of the play before the first act was over. Two years plus the months needed to make three versions of "L'Enigme." Time enough, you might think, for M. Hervieu to have conceived and been delivered of a thoroughly unrhetorical play. Such was not his good fortune. But the time did prove long enough for him to get clean away from all temptation to dramatize the Dreyfus case, with which the play has nothing whatever to do. "L'Enigme" serves as a measure of the distance which may separate the impression which causes a work of art from the impression it leaves, a record of how far from his springboard the diver may come up.

You lift your eyebrows, do you, at my calling "L'Enigme" a work of art? Would have lifted them, you say, even if you had not read the sincere destructive pages in which M. Romain Rolland attends to M. Hervieu's case? I don't mind. While I yield to many, to very many, in my liking for "L'Enigme," it spoke to me, in spite of the mechanism so laboriously and naively installed in its first act, with singular directness. There is much in it that repels me. Even for such a short and violent story it is too loud, too bare, too obviously a strict follower of its constructor's blue-print. The characters seem always to be self-consciously thinking, "We mustn't say or do anything irrelevant. M. Hervieu will scold us if we're in the least irrelevant." They are ever in their great taskmaster's eye. Yet the play did make me feel what at the hour of starting for the theater I had only known, that death is a barbarous, anachronistic punishment of adultery, that an adultery which ends in murder or suicide ends badly.

I remember being on a glacier once, with two other men. We had lost our way, we were cold and hungry, darkness was coming on. Professed lovers of the open air for about a month every year, professed scorners of cities for exactly the same period, we should have welcomed, on that August night, even a city to dwell in. We were in no danger so long as we did not move, for an ample moon was scheduled and would, in a few hours, be lighting us off the ice, but we were temporarily wretched. Nothing to eat, nothing but glacier water to drink, nothing to smoke. One of my friends, searching his rucksack more profoundly, made a noise of discovery—cigars! He produced them one by one. One, two—only two in all, and three smokers. In a flash a truth I had long known came all the way home to me. One and one do not make three. Since that moment I have seen points of resemblance between life and Paul Hervieu. An evening with him, like that evening on the glacier, turns old knowledge into feeling.

Only two or three of his *tragedies bourgeoises* have been given in this country. I wonder why all of them, except the earlier criticisms of French law, have not been translated and published. Something would be lost, of course. English cannot be coaxed or bullied into that modern equivalent of French alexandrines which M. Hervieu often intends, yet he must be less difficult, with his rather stiff declamation and his want of grace, than his lighter-handed contemporaries. Speeches are more easily translated than talk, the purple of prose than the fine linen. His plays are largely scenario, and scenarios die hard. The importance of children, the power of a child to keep the separation of its parents from becoming a perfect separation—themes like these are exportable. The most general of the impressions M. Hervieu makes on me he would still make, I am sure, through any translation. I should distinguish, above the creaking of his dramaturgy, the sound of a real mind in pain.

P. L.

Mr. Wells Avoids Trouble

The Wife of Sir Isaac Harman, by H. G. Wells. New York: The Macmillan Co. $1.50.

SOMEWHERE in "The New Machiavelli" H. G. Wells pictures himself surrounded by piles of manuscripts discarded in an effort to find a true account of his story. When I finished reading "The Wife of Sir Isaac Harman" I wondered whether Mr. Wells had not passed beyond the stage of rejecting any part of his own work as inadequate. For though this latest book is amusing, and perhaps useful, it is a careless book written with comfortable facility out of the upper layers of his mind. You say to yourself, Wells has turned out another book. You cannot say to yourself, as you could of his earlier work, Wells has learned from fresh experience and Wells is giving of that experience. For "Tono-Bungay" and "The New Machiavelli" were wrung with tortured sincerity out of a man's own life, and they were scarred and shapeless with the effort; they seemed to stammer inevitably into Wells's famous suspension points, with their own inner need for the elusive fringes of the truth.

Since he wrote "The New Machiavelli" Wells seems like a man who has retired to live in the country on the proceeds of his accumulated spiritual capital. Where formerly each book had been a fresh adventure and a new conquest, these later ones seem like creations from an armchair which cost little and give little. No doubt it is understandable that men should grow weary of danger, that arctic explorers should become lecturers and that old soldiers should write their memoirs, that Wells should plagiarize Wells. Few men who write have driven themselves as he has driven himself. The old Wells seemed to be living in a chronic crisis, in which there were immense visions and shattering disappointments, a gorgeous socialism breaking its heart over the actual facts. In the characters he created love was a pursuit in which the woman his hero desired was always just beyond the one he possessed. He was forever adjusting his hope to reality, trying almost in agony to find in England a home for his dreams. And because that struggle was relentless, Wells has come to typify the modern man, his weakness and his constant relapses, his tentative hope and his overwhelming tasks.

For what distinguished Wells among the Utopians is the fact that his Utopia was never finished and that every new experience amended it radically. He was not content to indulge his fancy or to clamor for freedom. He seemed to live in that dangerous region where freedom is being tried and vision embodied. He seemed to be buffeted from both sides, challenged by his dreams which revolted at the compromises of reality, and assaulted by reality which denounced the emptiness of all dreams. He seemed to spend himself in that struggle—the severest that a man can face; and he seemed to win by a constant renewal of effort in which he refused to sink either into placid acceptance of the world, or into self-contained satisfaction with his vision.

But in his later books there has been an evident slackening of effort, betrayed at first by a too great fluency of style, an increase of mannerism, a tendency to large rhetoric, and to plots which creak along by accident. Worse than that, his heroines have become distant and beautiful, they have moved up in society as heroines do, so that of late a Wells heroine to have a soul and to suffer must also have a title. Moreover, the villain has appeared, as the husband in "The Passionate Friends," as Sir Isaac in this book. Now a villain is a device for shirking the issue; you ascribe all the difficulties to him, and your story can proceed. But he is fatal to the truth, as the earlier Wells would have proclaimed on every page.

Yet here is the villain drawn as an uncannily malignant figure who is responsible for modern commercialism and for the suffering of generous souls like the wife, Lady Harman. "Poor Sir Isaac had lived like a blind thing in the sunlight, gathering and gathering, when the pride and pleasure of life is to administer and spend . . . ." And you take it from this book that only when he dies is freedom possible. At any rate, Lady Harman kisses the other man and the final note is a happy one. The earlier Wells, I think, would have begun the book there; he would have written the history of the marriage of well-meaning Lady Harman and well-meaning and inadequate Mr. Brumley. He would, in short, have faced the real problem of love and business and politics, which is not of black villains and of white heroines, but of maundering and confused human beings.

Wells has tried to write that book several times, but of late the effort seems too great for him, and so he writes instead these hasty, imitative, and somewhat querulous additions to the stock of the popular novel. There has perhaps always been in him a tendency to run away from his problem. His distressed heroes and heroines have fled to laboratories or gone up in balloons or committed suicide. He himself has fled recently from the business of reconstruction to a very thin picture of "The World Set Free." Generally he has conquered this weakness or compensated it by a great mass of honest speculation and vivid experience, but in this latest book the flight has become precipitate amidst a wreckage of abstract nouns in the plural and absurdly simplified accounts of human motive. For the mere fact that Wells has written about marriage as if the wife were all innocence and the husband all villainy is in itself the most distressing commentary on this book.

W. L.

The Right to Believe

The Mob, a play in four acts, by John Galsworthy. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 60 cents net.

MANY gallant creations have come from Mr. Galsworthy, but none deeper or more poignant than "The Mob." For a time Mr. Galsworthy seemed diverted. "The Pigeon" and "The Eldest Son" were characteristic, but they were slighter than seemed warranted by his powers. In this recent drama, however, (produced on the English stage last March and now published for the habituated reader of plays), he returns to a larger, more inclusive world. There is, moreover a change in mental temper. No longer does he blindfold himself and his reader to hold his scales impartially. He stands squarely before a common moral issue, and, while still reticent, commits himself as never before.

The beauty of courage has always stirred the soul of Mr. Galsworthy. This is a drama of the beauty of courage. By accident it relates to war, and since war is uppermost in people's minds perhaps the accident is happy. Mr. Galsworthy could not, in point of time, have calculated to help our groping sympathies, but because he adverts to the sharp problem of public action and private conscience his drama responds to the cue of the hour.

A British imperial exigency creates the situation in "The Mob." Several British subjects have been murdered by the natives of a powerful country, presumably in Africa. Feeling runs high in England and the idea of a war is popular. The government of the day is impressed with this feeling. It is ready to accede to the newspapers and the belligerent patriots, and to send its soldiers to the front. One member of the government, however, Stephen More, the Under Secretary of State, realizes it is the typical device of Empire, the petty war of aggression. He loves his country, but he believes the great powers have got to change their ways in dealing with weaker nations. He is unalterably convinced against the war. In the teeth of an outbreak of actual frontier fighting, he goes straight to the House, to denounce his government's action, "agreeable to the blind moment, odious to the future." Greeted with anger, he is physically assaulted before he finishes, and is left with no course but to resign.

Such moral protests are not unusual in politics. They are generally regarded as creditable, though impractical. But in More's case a flag has been not lowered but raised. He is a man of forty, "with a fine-cut face, a rather charming smile, and the eyes of an idealist." The son-in-law of an old soldier, Sir John Julian, his friends are members of the ruling caste. Yet, in spite of the misunderstanding of them all, in spite of his wife's intense and passionate patriotism, he decides to stump the country. To everyone this seems madness; practically, in his wife's words, the action of a cur. His own constituents try to bend him. He falters, weakens, yearns to yield. But, when the first British reverses are followed by a savage burst of chauvinism, he holds to his need to speak his truth.

If Mr. Galsworthy manages in the first two acts to give one an extraordinarily vivid sense of every single human being introduced, it is nothing to the skill with which his next act captures the personality of a mean and angry mob. You realize from the forerunning acts More's inexplicable cause. His father-in-law thinks him a fanatic. His sister-in-law, with her husband at the front, is inevitably embittered. The editor who comes to see him demeans him as a political imbecile. The newspapers call him a degenerate. His servants begin to leave him. His wife, repelled by his inflexibility, turns to ice. His child, fresh from her nurse, asks: "What is an anti-patriot, stop-the-war one, Mummy?" With this behind him, he attempts to get his public hearing. He is greeted with jeers and laughs, hooted, stoned, and spat on. Immovable, the crowd hates him. Unyielding, it sullenly "lets 'im be." It is a short scene, but vile, appalling and truthful. There is no mitigation in their hatred of one who speaks a new language; and he, understanding, speaks without one change.

In this hour of gall, More returns to see his wife. During his absence she has tasted the penalties of his ungrateful courage. The servants have poured in unwilling ears the verdict of the street. Much worse than this muttering of intolerance is her sister-in-law's morbid vision of the war. The girl has seen her soldier-husband dead, and More comes back to learn that "dream bad dreams, and wait, and hide oneself—there's been nothing else to do." In the pity and tenderness that surge in him at this recital, his wife attempts to make him cease his fight. "It shall be me—and everything." For a moment he takes her to him, then sees the pit beneath him, shrinks back, and stands away. "It is as if a cold and deadly shame had come to them both. Quite suddenly More turns, and, without looking back, feebly makes his way out of the room."

A less heartfelt drama might close with this enticement, but these people are human beings, interwoven by life. Before they see each other again the woman knows that, in truth, her brother is dead. When she does come, it is to part. It is then that More pays his price. "For God's sake," he begs, "put your pride away, and *see.* I'm fighting for the faith that is in me. What else can a man do? What else? Ah! Kit! Do see!" Her answer is the simplest. "I'm strangled here . . . I spent last night on the floor—thinking—and I know!"

Before the end, which comes to him as it came to Jaures, More swims for a moment in the black waters that are to engulf him. "Put up with the truth for once," he shouts to the invading mob. "You are the thing that pelts the weak; kicks women; howls down free speech." Other words leap flamingly, but a swift blow stops all.

An instant later Mr. Galsworthy, in a flash of most truthful ironic vision, shows the Aftermath in tableau. A peaceful sunny square, musical with birds: and there, silhouetted against the light, a monument erected to his memory. On the pedestal, engraved with beautiful unawareness, are the solemn words "Faithful to his Ideal."

There is, in "The Mob," a suggestion of moral preciosity. But, if one is tempted to believe that More made a gratuitous sacrifice of his life, one immediately thinks: "Sacrifice to what?" The answer comes sharply, sacrifice to a brute, a beast—the brute in all of us when we join the mob. "The Mob" says that, hard as steel.

It is easy, of course, to be sentimental about martyrs. Life is pragmatic, and to achieve one must compromise. But one cannot read "The Mob" without a stabbing realization of the little infidelities of life. The mob itself, after all, is nothing. The instrument that tortured Stephen More, it is merely a symbol of our arcane friend, the World. If the navvy growled at More in the alley behind the theatre, he only rendered guttural the suave accents of the editor of the Parthenon. It may seem unreal that every creature in the play, down to the wistfully ingenuous daughter, should strip More of comforts and leave him "alone as the last man on earth." In point of fact, however, this is singularly true to life. When it comes to the trials of private conscience, every man is just as terribly alone as the soldier on the firing line, the woman in the ache of childbirth, the invalid in the icy clasp of death. Fortunate is man if, by lucky chance, his own and other consciences coincide. But there is no promise that such will be the case. "The Mob" brings no comfort to the believer in human remissions, human concessions, human tolerances. Where it brings comfort is in its mordant confidence that, without courage of one's faith, one may not mould to the heart's desire.

The New
REPUBLIC
Published Weekly

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PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY THE REPUBLIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., 421 WEST TWENTY-FIRST STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT. ROBERT HALLOWELL, TREASURER.

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Portable William James

Habit, by William James. New York: Henry Holt & Company. 50 cents net.

AN intelligent publisher would no more think of snatching thirty or forty pages out of Spinoza's Ethics, and binding them separately than he would think of turning a few propositions from Euclid into a gift-book. Treated so, the great severe unifiers would make dreary reading. Nor as wholes do they often get their message across to the average man. Suppose he does follow them a little way. What happens? He feels as if he were being towed further and further from concrete lands, as if he were nearing no coast, not even a dangerous. In nine cases out of ten he cuts the hawser and makes for home.

But suppose he reads on to the end of some philosophic system, not without a real effort to master it? He is left dissatisfied, suspicious. He accuses philosophers of reducing all things to law by coolly overlooking large tracts of the irreducible. Would the particular philosophy he has been grappling with be very different, he asks, if its maker had spent his life shut up in a box?

William James, being in achievement and at heart no unifier, no system-maker, has written many chapters which can usefully be reprinted each by itself. Almost any chapter illustrates his insight into details. Almost any chapter persuades us that here is a philosopher who shares not only such philosophic doubts and worries as we happen to have, but also a great many of our other interests. And the more chapters we read the stronger grows this persuasion.

He did not spend his days remote in a box. All his life he lay exposed to the sights and sounds and smells of reality, sensitive to them, endlessly curious about them. His books read as if he had passed much of his time in the open, much of it in human companionship. Not only does he deliver his message like a man of this world. It was out of this world, with its strangeness and miscellaneousness, that he got the raw material of all but the supernatural bits of his message. His books are crammed with insight into the parts of this miscellaneousness.

Nobody is more alive to the value of a superlative memory, nobody more convinced that it is a necessary part of a certain kind of great man's equipage easier, who never bids us undervalue the goods we cannot hope for.

Nobody is more alive to the value of a superlative memory, nobody more convinced that it is a necessary part of a certain kind of great man's equipment. Yet he is not afraid to tell you that the natural retentiveness of your memory is something you cannot better, no matter how hard you try. He would tell you so, such is the perfection of his candor, even if the bad news made you despair.

But he does not happen to think the news very bad. Although a man's general retentiveness "is a physiological quality, given once for all with his organization, and which he can never hope to change," he can make his memory a more serviceable instrument by "elaborating the associates of each of the several things to be remembered."

Besides, William James has known efficient workers whose memories were never very good tools, just as he has known efficient workers who had little power of voluntary attention. They did not lose heart. You need not lose heart. There is something which can make you efficient in spite of your untrustworthy memory and your wandering mind, and that something is passion for your work. If you keep passionately pegging away you will wake up one morning and find yourself among the experts at your kind of job.

Be brave, he tells you, though you lack all the gifts, the desirable and admirable gifts, which flower into intellectual greatness. But what if you lack all others as well? What if you are absolutely instead of relatively a duffer? Still you need not despair. Still it pays to be brave. The whole moral world remains open, where victories are won by men and women who have no mental force worth mentioning. Into each of us each of us can put, if he chooses, an indomitable something. And most of us can choose.

Open William James almost anywhere and before long your feet will be on just such a moral trail as the one we have been following. Your guide never tries to deceive you. Here and there he stops you, bids you look at things you must renounce, never depreciates the worth or dims the glory of what you are renouncing, teaches you, on the contrary, to rate it higher than you did before, and in whatever predicament he leaves you does not leave you forlorn. Courage is in your heart, courage that grows and flourishes and puts forth fruit in due season.

Nor are you, to tell the truth, alone with courage. William James is with you. The words he chooses, and the cadence of his sentences, so like the cadence of good talk, quickly bring you into his presence and keep you there. You see and hear a real man, a real American, lucid, tolerant, eager, inventive, surprising, who dares to endure, to do and to believe. His mind is always touching the real world, and sheds light at every point of contact. The real world is penetrated at a thousand and one places by his mind, yet the perceiving and interpreting mind leaves reality undeformed and lifelike.

No more high-hearted, no more solidly nourished apology for courage has been written in our day. The virtue of William James's books is to make us brave. Their defect, in case the reader be a shade less happily suggestible than the average man, is to make us wonder. Even if the world were not what it is, but so irrationally bad that courage would be useless, would not William James have sought to make us as brave as he would still have been, in spite of everything, himself?

PHILIP LITTELL.

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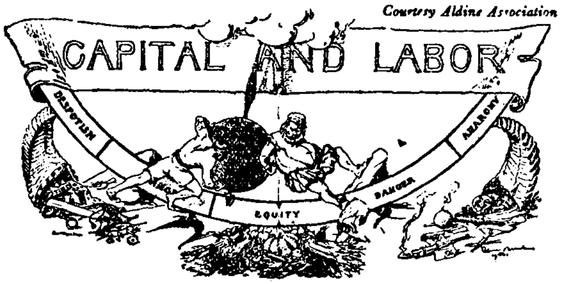

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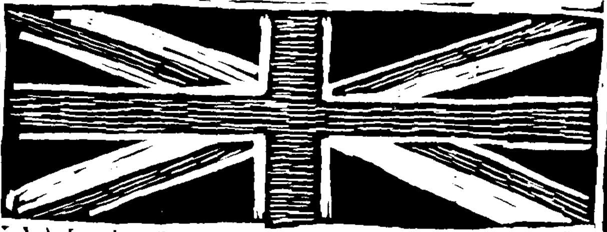

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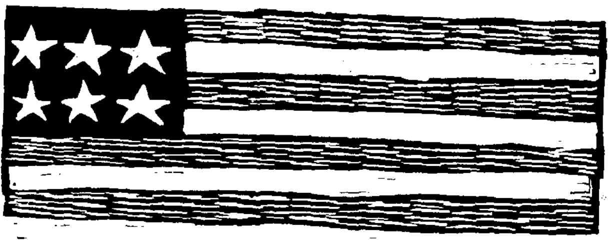

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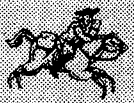

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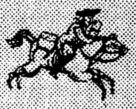

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Plaid Cymru ◆ Social Democratic and Labour ◆ Social Democratic lenge of stabilizing an increasingly interpenetrated yet anarchic world economy, where factory workers in the Third World produce far more than they have the purchasing power to consume, and where the province of international finance has once again slipped away from money managers with a conception of the broad public interest and is again, as Keynes wrote, "the byproduct of the activities of a casino."

THE NEW REPUBLIC has continued to publish writers in the Keynesian tradition: Jeffrey Sachs warning of the deflationary effect of the Third World debt policy, so reminiscent of the Allies' program for Weimar Germany; Robert McIntyre and Lawrence Summers making the case that tax equity and economic growth are complements; and many other such heretics. The antecedents of nearly all of this reasoning can be found in THE NEW REPUBLIC archives, over one of the bylines of Keynes. And orthodoxy, of course, continues fiercely to resist.

As the maestro wrote in the edition of February 20, 1935: "The strength of the self-adjusting school depends on having behind it almost the whole body of organized economic thinking and doctrine of the last hundred years. . . . If the heretics on the other side of the gulf are to demolish the forces of 19th-century orthodoxy—and I include Marxism in orthodoxy equally with laissez faire, these two being the 19th-century twins of Say and Ricardo—they must attack them in their citadel. No successful attack has yet been made. The heretics of today are the descendents of a long line of heretics, who, overwhelmed but never extinguished, have survived as isolated groups of cranks."

May TNR always publish such cranks.

A hard-nosed plea for woolly-mindedness.

ONE WORLD, MAX

By Robert Wright

> The ethical system of these men of the New Republic, the ethical system which will dominate the world state, will be shaped primarily to favor the procreation of what is fine and efficient and beautiful in humanity.
>
> —H. G. Wells, *Anticipations*

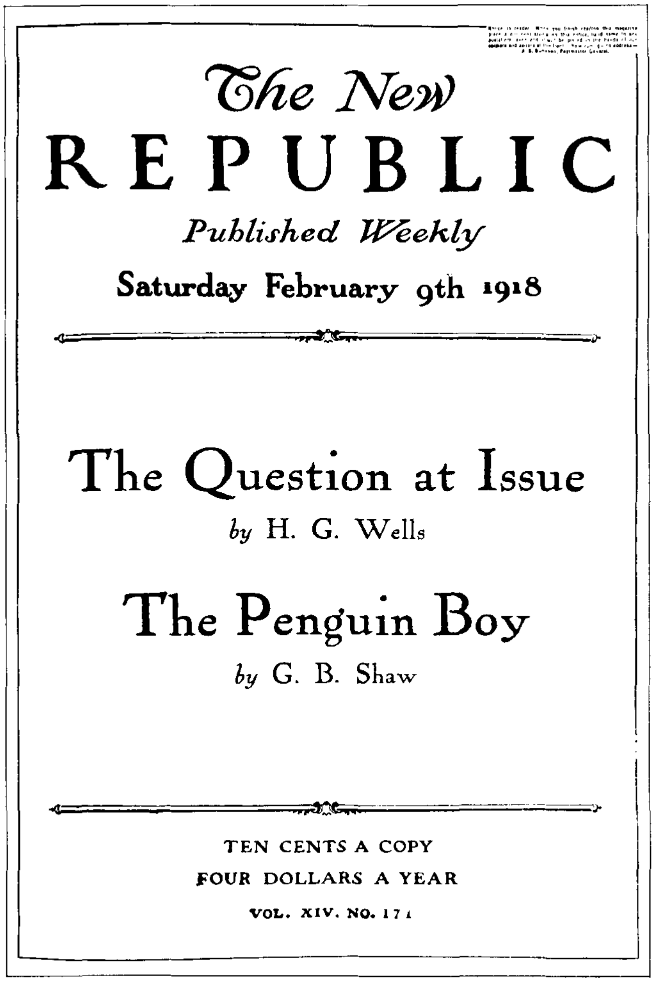
Obviously, Wells wasn't referring to the men of this NEW REPUBLIC. He wrote *Anticipations* in 1901, 13 years before the magazine came into being. Nor, in 1914, when the magazine's founding editors chose its title, were they referring to Wells. By Walter Lippmann's account, they settled on the name "New Republic" half-heartedly and "with a positive dislike for the suggestion of utopianism."

Maybe so. But the magazine was born in an age of utopianism, and it didn't escape the spirit of the times. It was in 1914 that Wells published the novel *The World Set Free*, one of the more notable of the various books in which he imagined a socialist world state. These two main variants of 20th-century utopianism—socialism and one-worldism—reached a climax of sorts within a few years. On behalf of each, the world launched a large-scale experiment: the Soviet Union and the League of Nations. Sporadic enthusiasm for the first experiment, and intense enthusiasm for the second, can be found in the magazine's pages over the decades.

This makes for some embarrassing reading. There is, for example, editor Bruce Bliven's 1938 "Letter to Stalin"—he even addressed it to "The Kremlin, Moscow, U.S.S.R."—in which he notes that the Soviet Union is "not only a country but an idea" and shares with Stalin some p.r. techniques that might earn the idea a warmer reception in the Western world. (Lesson one: the recent spate of executions "has had a bad effect upon world public opinion.") And, speaking for one-worldism, there is Henry Wallace, who briefly served as TNR's editor in the late 1940s, and who, among other things, wanted to give the United Nations its own air force. Wallace had the annoying habit of trying to sound messianic through the use of uppercase letters—as in "Those of us who know that One World is not only possible, but necessary . . ." etc.

Both of the century's utopian experiments are today commonly considered failures. The Soviet Union is a basket case, the League of Nations is no longer with us, and the League's offspring, the U.N., serves mainly as a symbol of noble aspirations. But there is a large distinction between the two utopianisms, a distinction of potentially millennial dimensions. Socialism, in its purer forms, appears to be at a dead end. True, redistributive policies can keep ameliorating raw capitalism. But the boundary of that amelioration—the trade-off between economic efficiency and equality of economic outcome—appears to be fundamental. It is rooted in individual selfishness, in the fact that people don't work hard if they don't get rewarded commensurately; and selfishness is an aspect of human behavior that is not likely to fade away anytime soon.

One-worldism faces a comparable problem—the selfishness of nations—but (I will argue) it doesn't run into the clear-cut natural limit that dooms Communist states to poverty. Moreover, the logic behind one-worldism has actually grown stronger since World War I. In fact, you could argue that in recent decades one-worldism has been fitfully progressing, in forms less conspicuous than the League of Nations or the United Nations. Seventy-five years after Wells published *The World Set Free*, utopianism still stands a chance of going one for two on the century.



The New

REPUBLIC

Published Weekly

Saturday February 9th 1918

The Question at Issue

by H. G. Wells

The Penguin Boy

by G. B. Shaw

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VOL. XIV. NO. 171

COVER, FEBRUARY 9, 1918

This bold thesis calls for some mealy-mouthed qualification. By one-worldism I do not mean a world government. I'm referring broadly to the institutional subordination of national autonomy to international will. When the seven Western industrial powers (G-7) hold their annual summits and pledge to, say, stabilize the dollar, each is vowing to sacrifice some measure of its policy-making authority to international goals, and thus is endorsing a kind of one-worldism. This leads to an even more abject qualification: by one-worldism I don't mean one *worldism*, at least not in the short term. Strictly speaking, G-7 is an example of one-*Western*-worldism. And most other current instances of international constraint on national behavior also fall short of planetary breadth. But that's OK. The game plan of the more pragmatic one-worlders has always been to start small and branch out. Moreover, there is a brand of one-worldism whose ultimate aim is one-Western-worldism, or some variation thereof: the idea that a condominium of superpowers should keep an otherwise chaotic world under control. There is something to be said for this, but only so long as the club doesn't abuse its power and has a liberal membership policy.

The most ardent one-worlders have always, like Marxists, claimed that history was on their side. This lets them profess sunny optimism during the most depressing times. The international traumas that you might think would dampen their spirits they see as the very fuel that will drive civilization into a higher orbit, from national to international organization. Thus in 1917, as soldiers were dying at a rate of a few thousand per day, H. G. Wells began an article in TNR by declaring that "the international situation at the present time is beyond question the most wonderful that the world has ever seen." Even the magazine's editors occasionally got carried away and discussed one-worldism in a teleological tone of voice. Writing about the envisioned League of Nations in 1917, they asserted, "We have entered upon another phase of political unification, a phase greater in its consequences but similar in its methods to the formation of national states in the 19th century." Thanks to the "impulse to unity, which common perils and common necessities have forged," the world is "growing toward federation." Well, that's a load off everyone's mind.

There are at least two kinds of one-worlders. The more woolly-minded seek the abolition of the nation-state; they expect the hearts of Russians and Americans and Germans automatically to realign with the Earth's axis. Thus, L. P. Jacks, writing in TNR in 1918, dismissed a league of nations as insufficiently ambitious. Permanent peace could come only "when the essential outlines of the political life of mankind can no longer be represented by the mechanical division of the Earth's surface into territorial areas, when the colored patches will disappear, and the black lines round the edges be rubbed out."

TNR's editors held the more sober view that an international peacekeeping structure should be built out of national components, by convincing governments that some sacrifice of autonomy was in their interest. Still, the editors, like just about everyone, underestimated the complications. Herbert Croly, the founding editor, saw nothing particularly difficult about getting nations to punish transgressions of international law even when their own interests weren't immediately threatened. In 1917 he assured readers that "those nations who had formerly conceived their highest duty to be that of neutrality in a world of conflicting national ambitions would all acknowledge the higher duty of being aggressive and even belligerent on behalf of the common security." More generally, Croly was not especially worried about the amply documented dark side of nationalism. "There is no sufficient basis in history for the condemnation of the national spirit as essentially predatory," he wrote. "There is no sufficient basis in logic for characterizing as inevitable the prevailing opposition between national ambition and international order."

I beg to differ. Nations are (not surprisingly) like people; they are uncompromisingly selfish, and they can be ruthless in pursuing their interests. So there is roughly as much tension between national self-interest and international order as between the human ego—to say nothing of the id—and civilization. The sound argument for one-worldism isn't that nations are essentially noble and selfless, any more than civilization is a product of brotherly love. The sound argument is that, for nations as for people, if all members of a group exercise some restraint, particularly in checking their less noble impulses, all of them can be better off. Nations, like people, are *in principle* capable of recognizing this and even acting on it. The logistical problems—notably ensuring that everyone abides by the common rules—are not trivial, either in a society of people or of nations. But they are not insurmountable.

In the end, TNR opposed membership in the League of Nations, but only because it came with the whole Versailles Treaty attached. Of course, the League probably would have been impotent even with U.S. participation. One hitch was the problem Croly had understated: getting individual nations to apply costly sanctions for the greater good. Another was the League's slavish emulation of democracy. Wells—who spent much of the 1920s calling for the League's abolition and the construction of a more powerful structure—described the problem with a one-nation, one-vote rule in the honestly elitist terms that were acceptable in those days. "Any little bundle of human beings, however small, illiterate, and unimportant, provided only that it was a law unto itself and waved a flag about and insisted upon a cantankerous independence, was regarded as a possible unit by the pedants who devised the League."

In theory, the League was to be kept from drowning in democracy by its executive council, which would be dominated by five great powers. The same trick was tried with the Security Council of the United Nations, which replaced the League in 1945. But in both cases each power had the veto. And in the case of the U.N., this need for consensus proved immobilizing once the cold war began. TNR's editors got the picture early on. "We see no hope," they wrote in 1946, "that the conflicting ideologies of our time will be reconciled in time to form world government without war."

As it happened, the source of their despair—the prospect of world war in the atomic age—would end up saving the planet, at least for the time being. Nuclear weapons made the great powers acutely averse to large-scale hostilities, so the cold war's ideological tension was sublimated in a series of bloody but neatly contained proxy wars (exactly the sort of dust-ups that a unified condominium of superpowers might have been able to prevent). But nuclear arms may prove a short-lived blessing. As more and more nations possess them, deterrence grows more complex, especially if, in a post-cold war world, the simplicity of bipolar conflict gives way to something messier. However quaint the editors' fears of 1946 sound now, they may prove to be merely premature, not mistaken.

By the mid-1950s, the impotence of the U.N. was well established. (Its one forceful act, sending troops to Korea, came when the Soviet delegate wasn't present to veto it.) But no sooner had the one-world debate assumed overtones of humility and sobriety than intoxication returned. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, the mystical Jesuit priest whose weird fusion of science and theology the Catholic Church had kept from publication, died in 1955. His manuscripts—most famously the hyperpoetic and somewhat cryptic *The Phenomenon of Man*—became widely available, and they made all past variants of one-worldism look timid by comparison.

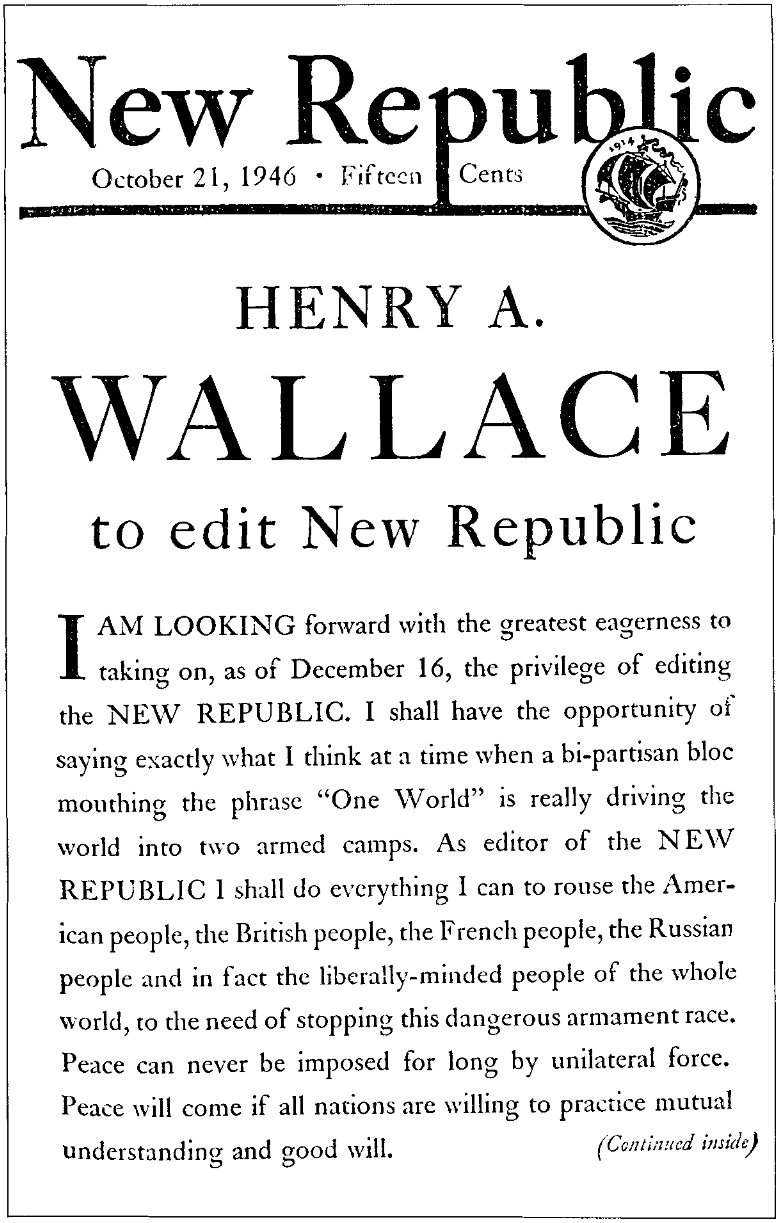
To begin with, Teilhard de Chardin wasn't just talking about international cooperation or world federalism or anything else on the merely political plane—or on the merely physical plane, for that matter. The culmination of humanity's biological and social evolution, he believed, would find the species in some sort of ineffable spiritual end zone called Point Omega, at which point, as best I can make out, the planet would turn into a giant organic love-blob. Greed and nationalism and territoriality would yield to sympathy and altruism. This sort of transformation of human nature is a laudable thing for a priest to pray for and work for, but I would hate to live on a planet whose survival depended on it.

Teilhard de Chardin thought the transformation would be aided by new information technologies. He wrote lyrically about the inchoate international nervous system, about how humankind was (with the aid of computers) turning into a global brain. And this was no mere metaphor. He thought that the species was actually evolving into a single organism; that phone lines and radio waves were the infrastructure for the "noosphere"—the emerging collective consciousness of mankind.

By "consciousness," Teilhard de Chardin meant, first of all, something too ethereal and creepy to get into here. But he also seemed to mean something more concrete: that information technology, by bringing us more closely in touch with foreigners, would make us more aware of their plight and perhaps more sympathetic to it. This is a common hope of one-worlders. It is nice to think that space bridges and global news broadcasts can bring mutual understanding, and—who knows?—they may. But people have shown a remarkable ability to hate other people who live just across town or down the block—especially when those other people are clumped together in distinct groups. So it isn't clear that bringing Russians into our living rooms is going to endear them to us. Naturally, if Ted Koppel takes pains to present them sympathetically, they'll make a favorable impression. But why should we expect such sympathetic treatment once détente is out of vogue? Throughout history the mass media have reliably catered to nationalist impulses during times of tension, especially war.

This isn't to say that one-worlders should be unenthusiastic about information technology. In several ways, it is working to make prophets of them. But its work has much less to do with touchy-feely things, like sympathy and the global village, than with concrete things, like economics. To begin with, there is the—you didn't hear it here first—globalization of the economy. It isn't just that communication is a prerequisite for trade, and that therefore cheap and instantaneous information transfer brings more trade. It is also that information transfer increasingly *is* trade. Information as a commodity — popular music, software, consultants' reports, brokers' advice, movies—constitutes a still-growing share of economic output, and by most accounts the growth will continue for a while. (Non-entertainment information services alone grew from six percent of U.S. GNP in 1967 to nine percent in 1980.) As the cost and time it takes to transmit these commodities internationally approaches zero, the practical difference between selling to an American and to a European does too. Further, cheap, reliable, instantaneous communication allows corporations to straddle national borders easily. Overseeing a factory in Hong Kong while sitting in London is getting simpler.

The resulting economic interdependence, if present trends continue, could succeed, first of all, in making war less attractive. The cost of cutting trade lines and wrecking several enemy economies is already a bit higher now, when our imports are nine percent of GNP, than it was in 1914, when the figure was 2.6 percent. (The figure for exports has grown only slightly.) And multinational corporations—to say nothing of transnational ownership, which is also growing—could similarly contribute to a right-wing pacifism. Western capitalists, with factories and consumers strewn across the globe, have an interest in discouraging even isolated wars that their nations aren't directly involved in. This isn't to say they'll perceive that interest and act on it; the point for now is just that objectively war makes less sense than it used to.


New Republic

October 21, 1946 • Fifteen Cents

HENRY A.

WALLACE

to edit New Republic

I AM LOOKING forward with the greatest eagerness to taking on, as of December 16, the privilege of editing the NEW REPUBLIC. I shall have the opportunity of saying exactly what I think at a time when a bi-partisan bloc mouthing the phrase "One World" is really driving the world into two armed camps. As editor of the NEW REPUBLIC I shall do everything I can to rouse the American people, the British people, the French people, the Russian people and in fact the liberally-minded people of the whole world, to the need of stopping this dangerous armament race. Peace can never be imposed for long by unilateral force. Peace will come if all nations are willing to practice mutual understanding and good will. *(Continued inside)*

COVER, OCTOBER 21, 1946

Of course, economics won't be a formidable check on world war until capitalism's tentacles embrace the (as we used to say) Communist bloc. But, whatever happens in the Soviet Union and China over the next few years, I'm betting on such integration eventually. Obviously, if this doesn't happen, things will look bleak for any strong variant of one-worldism.

The second one-worldish thing that a more global economy does is foster policy coordination. Money now flows in and out of the American economy with such ease that aspiring monetary and fiscal policymakers find their endeavors increasingly futile. As the leaky national economy becomes hostage to international forces, we can either seize control of these forces in concert with other nations, or surrender a good measure of control altogether. It is in recognition of this that the G-7 summits take place. (True, the communiqués that come out of them aren't especially detailed or binding. But these summits have only been held, as economic summits, for a little more than a decade.) The European Community is now being reshaped by the same logic. Having endorsed the free flow of labor, capital, goods, and services—realizing that on balance this should help all its members—the Community is recognizing that some degree of joint economic regulation is now essential. (One-worlders are of two minds about trading blocs; it's fine if a few large aggregates of nations can deal with one another civilly, simplifying the logistics of economic cooperation, but not fine if the blocs become protectionist and nasty.)

The globalizing tendencies of information technology go beyond the financial realm. Backers of the National Institutes of Health's Human Genome Project sold the undertaking to taxpayers by touting its commercial and social benefits. But at the same time they realized that, in an age of modems, Xerox machines, and zillions of cheaply produced scientific journals, the data produced will spread worldwide, to be exploited anywhere in the industrial world. So the United States has been pressuring likely beneficiaries, such as Japan and Europe, to help finance the project. This could well become the basic pattern in big science.

The wider dispersion of scientific information also means that dangerous technological secrets are increasingly hard to keep. And as the recipes for chemical, nuclear, and biological weapons, undetectable explosives, etc., become common, the logic behind arms treaties, complete with intrusive international inspections, grows. Genetic engineering will raise a separate problem. Once it is possible to alter, say, human intelligence, or physical strength, in the laboratory, keeping this research under humane ethical controls will be impossible if it is conducted in an atmosphere of unregulated international military and economic competition. The race to build a superman will be on, and it won't be much fun to be one of the prototypes that doesn't work out as planned.

I could go on. (I haven't even gotten to the greenhouse effect, international terrorism, or the perils of an arms race in space.) But you probably get the picture by now. From the point of view of national self-interest, the logic behind international cooperation has grown in rigorously demonstrable fashion. International relations are increasingly a non-zero-sum game, in which our gain is not necessarily the other guy's loss, and vice versa. And it looks as if this trend will continue for some time.

But the big questions remain: Granted that the argument for global cooperation has grown, will this logic be acted on? Will nations manage to institutionalize cooperation on a significant scale? And if so, how coherent will the institutionalization be? Will we ever have a world government? Or a world federation of governments?

As for the first two questions: Who knows? As for the the last three: Who cares? A collection of effective makeshift cooperative efforts would suffice. If economic integration in a post-cold war world gives the superpowers a large stake in keeping the world fairly peaceful, and they pursue this goal in concert; if economic policies are centrally coordinated to keep the world economy stable; if environmental accords keep the planet cool and the water clean; if treaties, complete with intrusive inspection regimes, keep nuclear and biological weapons under control and anti-satellite weapons on the shelf; and if, as a bonus, the great powers see that it's in their interest to foster the development of democratic capitalism in the Third World—if all that happens, then who needs a world government? More to the point, if all that happens, what exactly is the difference between that and a (very weak) world government? It's a question of degree, and of appearance; if all the cooperation is done under one roof—the U.N.'s, say—it will seem more one-worldish than if the cooperation assumes many forms, some of them merely regional.

Either way, cooperation is more likely to be built bottom-up, in grass-roots fashion, than top-down. The League of Nations and United Nations demonstrate the difficulty of planning and building comprehensive cooperative machinery. It's often easier to work on a problem-by-problem basis, letting the nations most directly concerned work things out among themselves, and allowing other nations to sign on later. The 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (forged under the U.N.'s auspices) is a good example. It has only two dozen signatories, but among them are many big industrial nations; together they account for enough of the ozone problem so that each member's contribution (i.e., the economic costs of curtailing the use of chlorofluorocarbons) should be amply rewarded in the long run. Further, there are specific benefits of membership (or sanctions against non-membership), so an ongoing incentive for participation exists. This piecemeal approach has the advantage of not scaring people to death. Asking nations to give up a tiny amount of sovereignty at a time, in exchange for a specific reward, is different from asking them to grant police power to the U.N. and then rest assured that all will be well.

Human nature complicates some forms of international cooperation in much the way that it stymies communism. In both cases, there is what is called, in Garrett Hardin's classic formulation, the "problem of the commons." If no one sacrifices for the common good (if no workers in a pure Communist state work hard, if no nations cut down on chlorofluorocarbon emissions), everyone suffers (there's no food in the stores, there's no ozone layer). And if only one member of the group sacrifices, he suffers anyway, since the benefits of his sacrifice are divided among the entire group. It only makes sense to sacrifice if everyone agrees to sacrifice.

So how can I say that communism is doomed but international cooperation isn't? In part, the answer is practical. Even if everyone agrees to sacrifice, it is still necessary to identify and punish cheaters, since it is in everyone's self-interest to feign compliance while letting others do the work. In the case of an environmental treaty, this is doable; it is possible roughly to gauge the chlorofluorocarbon emissions (or fossil fuel consump-

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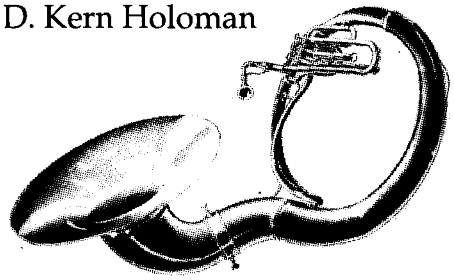

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tion, in the case of the greenhouse effect) of two dozen big nations and punish transgression with, say, token economic sanctions. But verifying that hundreds of millions of workers in a pure Communist state are working to the best of their ability, and punishing the ones who don't, is a logistical nightmare. There's no way to do it at an acceptable economic, to say nothing of moral, cost.

The larger difference between communism and environmental treaties is that looming environmental dangers are a given. We don't have the option of changing the physical laws of the universe so that industrial emissions are good for the planet. But Communist governments do have the option of ending communism, as some of them are starting to realize. That is the ultimate trouble with communism: it has created a problem of the commons where none need exist; it is a self-imposed greenhouse effect.

Even aside from the issue of controlling rational national selfishness by tightly enforcing treaties, there remains the problem of irrational national selfishness—which is to say, the great collective id: untrammeled nationalism. As I've said, it's doubtful that any transfer of individual allegiances from the national to the global level can be the driving force behind one-worldism; the bonds will have to be forged by the heads of nations, out of national self-interest. Still, it is conceivable that *some* measure of mass allegiance could subsequently form and take a bit of the virulence out of nationalism. That is the way it has often worked with the upward trajectory of social organization, through the city-state and the nation-state; the political arrangement coalesces first, sometimes even through coercion, and the allegiances follow later.

But a stark difference between these smaller-scale allegiances and global allegiance stands out. A key ingredient in allegiance—to the tribe, the city-state, the nation—has often been the perception of a threatening power against which the individual is by himself powerless to act. What could play that role for the entire world? There are several commonly mentioned candidates. Take the greenhouse effect. Like the Nazi war machine and the Communist monolith, it is big and spooky. But it has the unfortunate property of being inanimate—and invisible and, strictly speaking, hypothetical. How about terrorists? They are abundantly scary and contemptible, but so long as they are selective in their targets, they won't be a good focal point for worldwide fear. Maybe when they have nuclear weapons or as-yet-uninvented biological weapons, they'll be more inspiring.

If you don't believe that the world will remain discordant in the absence of some such rallying points, just look at the waning of the cold war. Our declining fear and suspicion of the Soviets has been matched (on a smaller scale) by rising fear and suspicion of the Japanese, as their perceived importance as allies declines (even though, in an economically integrated world, the actual importance of cordial relations with them remains great). It's almost as if there were some sort of "conservation of antipathy" law at work. If so, and we can't invent a sponge to soak up the world's fear and

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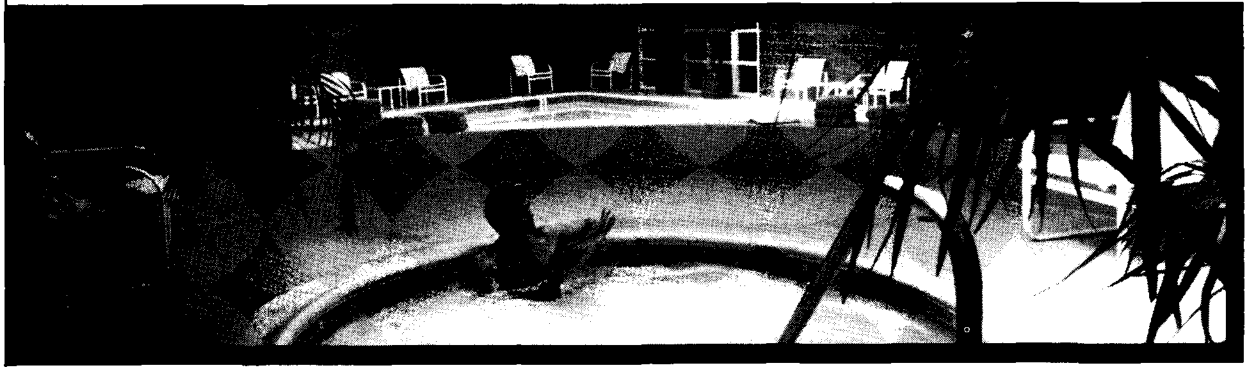

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loathing, and hostile aliens from another solar system don't pay us a timely visit, then all the non-zero-sum logic in the universe may not be enough to usher in a kinder, gentler, more rational century.

Whoa. I'm starting to slip into vague longings for brotherly love and apocalyptic plaints about the alternative. This is the first warning sign of woolly-minded one-worldism. And God knows this disease will do nothing for your reputation in hard-nosed Washington, even in the era of the greenhouse effect. Still, paging through past issues of TNR removes a bit of the stigma. Some smart and earnest people have enlisted in the cause of one-worldism over the years. Many have underestimated the awesome logistical problems by taking an overly sunny view of human nature. Still, they have gotten the basic picture: an immensely higher degree of institutionalized global cooperation is in the enlightened self-interest of the world's people and nations. The question is whether enlightenment will prevail.

Shortly before his death in 1946, H. G. Wells wrote *Mind at the End of Its Tether.* Now, after witnessing a second world war, he had surrendered to the pessimism that had periodically afflicted him throughout his life. He still believed that salvation lay in carrying political organization to the global level, but no longer did he believe this likely. "Man must go steeply up or down and the odds seem to be all in favor of his going down and out," Wells wrote. "If he goes up, then so great is the adaptation demanded of him that he must cease to be a man." Oh, lighten up. Surely you exaggerate.

The practical success of a failed prophecy.

SOCIALISM THEN AND NOW

By Michael Walzer

Seventy-five years ago most socialists believed that history had a direction, about which they had scientific knowledge; that the working class was the agent of historical progress and that socialism was its necessary achievement; that the bourgeoisie was doomed to defeat and disappearance and that this was a good thing; that markets, identified with the bourgeoisie, would also disappear, replaced by a centrally planned economy; that nationalism and all other localist and particularist ideologies would give way to working-class internationalism; that after the revolution there would be no more oppression, exploitation, or tyranny—hence no more social conflict.

All these beliefs have turned out to be wrong, falsified by "real life," which was supposed to be our epistemological as well as our political ally. The list has the ring of an archaic orthodoxy; it is defended today only by sectarians and professors in the West, only by functionaries in the East.

Yet a version of socialism, which I will call social democracy, is today the dominant regime in most of the Western world, so firmly established in the years since 1914 as to be able to withstand powerful right-wing assaults. Socialist theory was wrong most of the time; socialist practice was right, at least some of the time. I am not going to try here to explain the theoretical failures. They are a constant feature of political life and by no means unimportant: Communist tyranny derives in part from an effort to live by the theory, and to force other people to live by it, despite its wrongness. But my immediate concern is with the practical success of socialism. This was the work of democratic politicians, some of them opportunists and cowards, who stood nonetheless in a steady relationship with their (largely but never entirely working-class) supporters. The steadiness of the relationship was required by electoral politics, and it required in turn a continuous theoretical revisionism. Social democracy is best understood as socialism revised in the course of democratic debate.

Social democracy is not yet a fully realized, or an unproblematic, achievement. But its two central principles are widely accepted and at least partially practiced throughout the West. Politicians privately committed to their denial or reversal are unlikely to acknowledge the commitment in public. The two principles are: first, that all citizens ought to be included on equal terms in the political community (this is the democratic principle); and second, that this community is collectively responsible for the well-being, at least the minimal well-being, of all its members (this is the social principle).

No one should be excluded from political participation, from democratic power-sharing, because of class, race, religion, or gender. And all participants, fellow cit-

MICHAEL WALZER, a contributing editor, is the author most recently of *The Company of Critics* (Basic Books).

izens, have claims on each others' resources. Who else but the social democrats (in this country, the New Deal liberals) have consistently fought for these two principles? What other political movement has been the ally of every group of people—workers, Jews, blacks, women—demanding political enfranchisement, civil rights, social insurance? The forms of democratic participation and the extent of social provision: these are still being debated and probably always will be debated. But we are all democrats and all providers, at least in our public appearances. Even Ronald Reagan, that genial defender of mean-spiritedness, professed to be committed to the idea of a "safety net," and this is a social democratic idea: Reagan's counterparts in 1914 had no such commitment. The practical realization of "safety" means old-age pensions, unemployment compensation, health insurance, child care, educational grants and loans, and all the constraints on the profit motive that are necessary to protect the public from environmental hazards, dangerous working conditions, unsafe products, and so on. None of this has come easily, though it is easy to forget the long political struggles once they have been won or even partially won.

Social democrats today live with the problems of partial success—not the least of which is that we are said to be boring. In a sense, we have been boring from the beginning, as any politics will be that respects popular sentiment and resists theoretical rectitude. We can't provide the stimulations of vanguard militancy or fundamentalist conviction. Social democracy, one might say, is *programmatically* boring, as if in constant awareness of the old Chinese curse: May you live in interesting times! The 20th century has been multiply cursed, and social democratic politics has taken shape as an antidote to all the "interesting times." But why isn't the antidote, or the search for the antidote, as exciting as the disease? The answer has to do with the kind of antidote we are able to offer. Political participation and social provision are ways of coping; they aim at prevention and relief; they offer no hope of a Final Cure.

Social democrats today do not believe in Final Cures. History for us has no predetermined End, only the shifting directions that human beings, fighting and cooperating with one another, are able to impose upon it. Industrial workers are not the sure agents of historical progress, only one group of fighters and cooperators; they have played a vital part in the struggle for democracy and social provision (and may do so again in Poland, say, or in China), but they are a declining political force in the West, with an uncertain future. Nor were they ever destined to defeat or replace all the other social classes. Shopkeepers and entrepreneurs are just as crucial to the success of economic development and to the well-being of urban culture. And the free market, where such people thrive, is (so we have learned) one of the necessary regulative systems of a strong civil society. We only insist on what our opponents ought also to have learned, that the democratic state is another, equally necessary, regulative system. Tension between the two, like competition and conflict within each, are permanent features of any decent social order.

The tensions are worked out differently in different times and places, and so is the social order. There is no single best set of arrangements, no one preferred class or party or revolution, no leading nation or most advanced culture, no correct ideological position. The effort to repress nations and classes or to impose a single ideology makes for interesting times; social democracy offers accommodation instead.

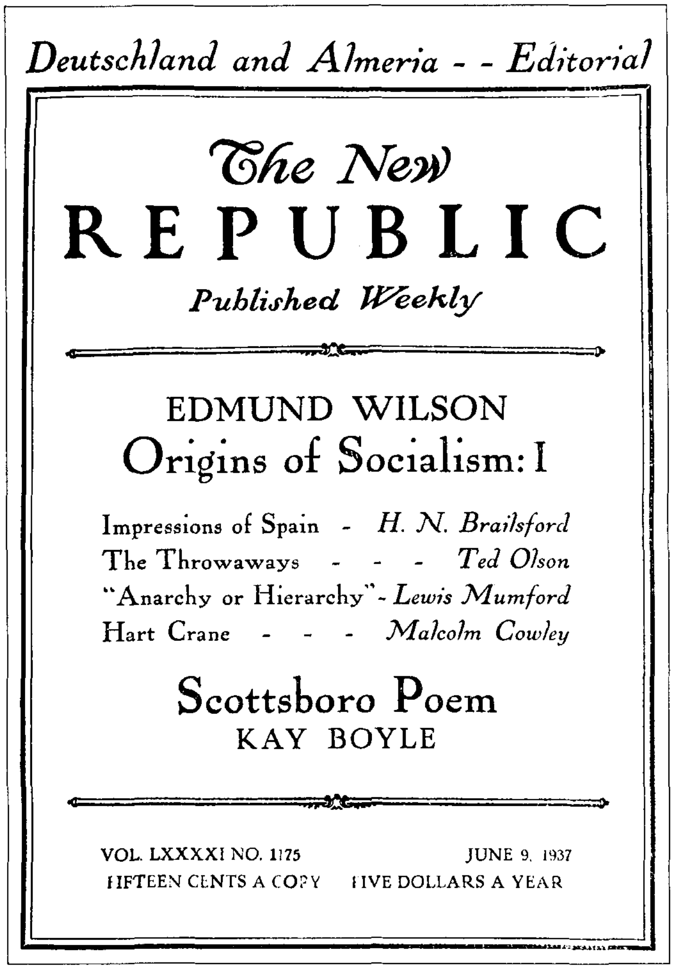
But accommodation isn't everything. Social democracy is also one of the possible directions of social change. It is not at this moment the direction of choice for large or stable majorities, even though the effort to dismantle the social democratic achievement is equally bereft of majority support. Politicians of the near left don't sound very confident these days of their ability to cope with the unexpected problems of the underclass—violence, drugs, social disorganization. (But how can we even start to cope without summoning up the kind of communal commitment that underpins every version of socialism?) Nor have these same politicians succeeded in addressing with vision or authority the long-term dangers of environmental damage and resource depletion. (But how is any address possible without the use of state power? And how can that power be trusted in the absence of large-scale democratic participation?)

My parenthetical questions suggest what a social democratic program for the immediate future might include. It would look first to the social infrastructure, seeking to reinforce all those networks, fellowships, neighborhoods, service organizations, communities of faith and interest within which people help and support and care for one another. Socialism has often given rise to a statist politics, committed to replacing mutual aid with bureaucratic benevolence. That indeed is the record of Communist regimes, except that the bureaucrats never turn out to be benevolent. We have come to a better understanding, closer to the spirit of early mutualists and syndicalists: socialism is above all a theory of civil society, aimed at enhancing all the forms of collective and cooperative self-help. But one can't do that by exhortation alone. The truth about George Bush's "thousand points of light" is that the power lines have to be installed mostly by the state, the electricity charges carried in substantial part by the taxpayer, else the lights will flicker and die.

A strong civil society is a social charge. Of course, individuals have to contribute—time and energy as well as money—but state support, legal recognition and regulation, subsidies, matching grants, and tax exemptions are also necessary. And so is the kind of popular mobilization that social democratic parties and movements have, sometimes at least, been able to generate. Long before the 1960s, social democracy was a participatory politics, activism and commitment spilling over from parties to labor unions to schools to cultural societies, theaters, journals, sports organizations, and so on. How might we generate activism of that sort today?

No one seems to know, but it clearly will not happen without some renewed sense of democratic solidarity.

Defenders of civil society commonly think of themselves as enemies of the civil service: anti-statist. But their real enemy is the totalitarian, not the democratic, state. The experience of social democracy (including its American liberal variant) suggests the proper uses of state power: for social insurance, for equity in welfare, for market surveillance, and, increasingly, for environmental protection. For all these uses, one needs a civil service, that is, professional bureaucrats civilly serving the public. Nothing that they do will prove useful in the end, however, if citizens are not engaged as well as served. Hence the crucial importance of the democratic side of social democracy. The left today ought to be committed to experiments in participation, in every sphere of society, on whatever scale and at whatever organizational level seems appropriate: decentralization, local control, worker self-management, and so on. Seventy-five years ago, the nationalization of industry was featured in all socialist programs. This has nowhere been a great success, for even when it has made managers more responsible and civil, it has tended to reproduce among workers the old patterns of subordination and passivity. A more energetic form of economic citizenship is as necessary today as a more energetic form of political citizenship: only the two together guarantee the stability and vitality of the democratic state.



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The New
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Published Weekly

EDMUND WILSON
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The Throwaways - - - Ted Olson
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Hart Crane - - - Malcolm Cowley

Scottsboro Poem
KAY BOYLE

VOL. LXXXXI NO. 1175 JUNE 9, 1937
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COVER, JUNE 9, 1937

Underlying the two principles of social democracy is a passion for equality. From the beginning, political inclusion and social provision have had a powerful negative purpose: they are meant to bring an end to all the forms of human subjection and servitude—first to the inequalities of traditional societies, already undermined by capitalism, then to the inequalities of capitalism itself. I have elsewhere described this as an abolitionist politics: "No more bowing and scraping, fawning and toadying, no more fearful trembling, no more high-and-mightiness, no more masters, no more slaves." I am sure that over the last 75 years we have moved closer to that dream of abolition—despite all the betrayals of the dream, particularly though not only in the Communist world: the cynical manipulation of egalitarian rhetoric, the covert re-establishment of privileged positions, the repression of popular protest. At the same time, such equality as we have realized has had side effects for culture and society that no one intended, opening the way for a renewed conservative critique of social democracy. Equality is still a struggle, and it would be foolish to deny that we have learned, in the manner of the 20th century, to worry almost as much about success as about failure.

Communist Parties in the East managed to reduce income differentials far beyond anything that social democrats achieved in the West. But the price was impossibly high: political inequality of a drastic sort, tyranny and brutality, more rather than less fearful trembling. The dismantling of communism will certainly reverse the process, bringing a new political equality and growing economic inequality. Social democrats in the West celebrate this reversal—we have fought communism from its beginning—even while we hope that democracy will set limits on the market. No community of equal and active citizens will tolerate the gross disparities of wealth that capitalism, unregulated, produced in the past. (This suggests an argument, against the conventional socialist wisdom of 1914, for the priority of politics over economics.)

In the West, the price of (a still very incomplete) egalitarianism is obviously not political tyranny but—so conservative writers argue—extensive social disorganization. A certain amount of fearful trembling among the lower classes is, according to this view, a necessary feature of economic discipline and therefore of law and order. When the safety net is set too high and people have no fear of falling, they are also fearless of their economic betters and insufficiently concerned about their own economic betterment. The result is shiftlessness and recklessness, the new urban culture of poverty, crime, and violence.

This is by now a standard right-wing critique of social democracy (here, "liberalism"), and it has this much truth: hierarchy and deference do indeed make for stability. But it has to be said that capitalism has a great deal to do with the destruction of the old hierarchies; its own inequalities are more naked and transient, more ostentatiously displayed, more crudely enforced. The problems of disorganization are most acute in those countries where the market is most free. I don't want to deny, though, that social democratic egalitarianism is also destabilizing. How could it not be?

Equality, even our own relative and partial equality, is a new human experience, its consequences radically uncertain. It is a great moment in our history when previously invisible men and women enter public life, but it is also a tumultuous moment, full of contradictions: mass protest and mass apathy; cultural rebellion and cultural exploitation; economic advance and urban degradation. We can imagine a society of equals, men and women who claim their political rights and assume their social responsibilities, who are secure in their individuality and cooperative in their citizenship. And we have some limited experience of such a society: the political movements forged in the course of the struggle for democracy and welfare—labor, civil rights, feminist—have often been like that. The world they have made, or helped to make, however, is not yet like that. Reason enough, it seems to me, both to criticize the work of those movements and to keep it up.

A memoir—and a complaint.

THE NEW REPUBLIC: A PERSONAL VIEW

By Alfred Kazin

I am just a year younger than THE NEW REPUBLIC and have been writing for it, on and off, since I was a 19-year-old City College senior in 1934. I was literary editor in 1942 and 1943 and a contributing editor for some years after that. Before I ever dreamed of writing for it I knew something of its political history—its founding at the height of the Progressive era and its supposed link with Woodrow Wilson (the last intellectual to occupy the White House) through the "Promise of American Life" agenda of its first editors, Herbert Croly, Walter Lippmann, Philip Littell, and Walter Weyl. Later I learned of the bitter disillusionment with the Versailles Treaty that turned it "isolationist" in the '20s. I came to see for myself its "left-leaning" during the Depression and its sudden support of World War II, not unconnected with the promptings of Willard Straight's widow Dorothy Whitney, who had funded the paper from the beginning and was now married to the English educational reformer Leonard Elmhirst. I had a long meeting with the Elmhirsts when I was a reporter in England in 1945.

From my reading of the paper and the books of Croly, Lippmann, Van Wyck Brooks, John Dewey, Randolph Bourne, and others of the "progressive generation," I was all too familiar with the many causes, arguments, doctrines, fashions, exclusions, and petty fanaticisms of American liberal democracy that had tramped through TNR from 1914 on. I knew even better and valued far more highly the literary side of the paper, which had championed supposedly "difficult" American moderns (like Robert Frost!) from the beginning. Under Edmund Wilson's sporadic tenure and Malcolm Cowley's longer stay, TNR had been crucial to the encouragement and protection of supposedly "unreadable" and "unacceptable" American talents. Wilson's epoch-making introduction to Stein, Proust, Joyce, and Yeats in *Axel's Castle* (1932) was first serialized right in the middle of the paper, not in "the back of the book." The same central place in the paper was later given to selections from Wilson's *To the Finland Station* (1940); earlier his remarkable reporting in *The American Jitters: A Year of The Slump* (1932) had also been featured in the most notable place. What Wilson believed in those days (TNR had good reason to assume) was what all thoughtful Americans, united by progressive ideals, now turning eagerly left, would sooner or later *want* to think.

What stays with me most about the 75 years of TNR is not just what was said by one generation and disavowed by another, but the division—now apparently more fixed than ever—between "the front of the book" (the issues of the day, politics, the "real world") and "the back of the book" (the arts, literature, and even an occasional poem). This division, to my mind, is not lifted or modified by the surly discontent with the young and with perversely left-leaning academics I often find in "M.P." 's "Diarist" column at the very end. That often sounds like the very end of all liberal hope

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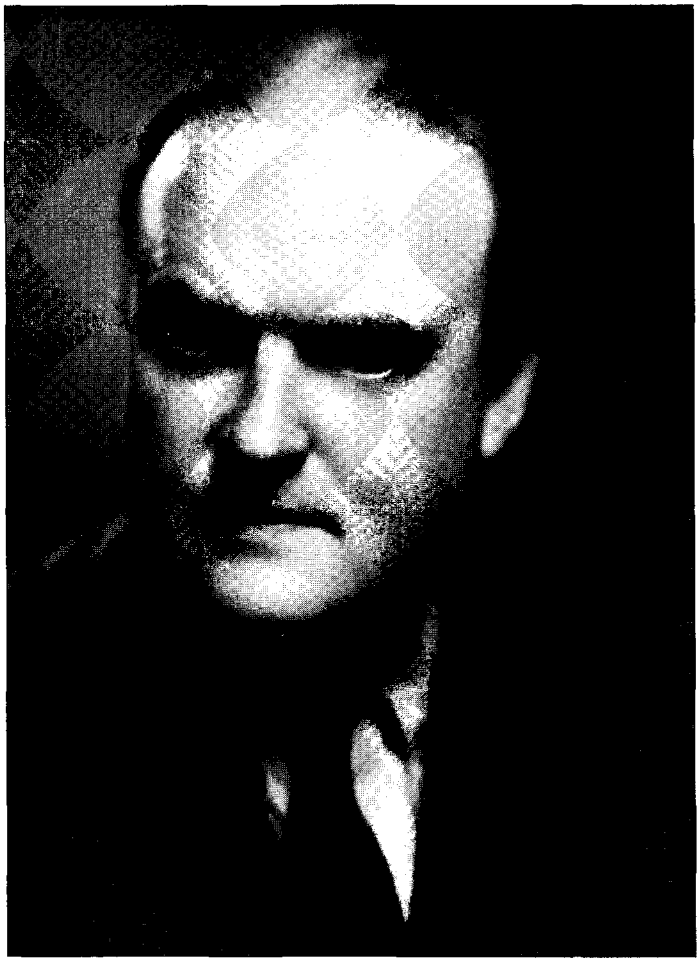
ALFRED KAZIN's latest book, *Our New York* (with David Finn), will be published this month by Harper & Row.

and of attention to some larger discontent in American life.

In the late summer of 1942, when I joined the literary side of the paper, the "front of the book" was Bruce Bliven, a hearty, professionally genial, but fretful ex-newspaperman who had been hired away from the *New York Globe* in the 1920s to put order into a paper still dominated by distracted intellectuals who felt that their mission to the country and the age went far beyond TNR. With the passing or easing out of these early figures—Walter Lippmann had shocked Herbert Croly by leaving to write editorials for the *New York World*—Bliven became TNR's one and only boss. Some famous early names remained on the masthead as contributing editors, but Bliven gave out the political line. With the help of a sensitive young Southerner, Tom Sancton (Tom was always decrying and bemoaning New York), Bliven wrote wartime editorials whose recurrent theme was "Turn The War Into A Global New Deal!" I thought this poppycock, and relished in "the front of the book" only TRB (Richard L. Strout of the *Christian Science Monitor*), who wrote about Washington with becoming skepticism. The "century of the common man" message was just a starter for the Henry Wallace who later succeeded to the editor's chair.



EDMUND WILSON

Edmund Wilson had been gone from TNR for some time, but Bliven at "the front of the book" and Wilson at "the back of the book" had been at such odds that not even Wilson's absence prevented Bliven at the famous in-office lunches from brooding bitterly on that distinguished and difficult man. I was 27 years old, entirely new to editing and publishing, admired Wilson beyond words, and until I wised up, was puzzled by the guarded, strangled muttering about Wilson's character I heard from Bliven. Since the latter was glad to feature two chapters from my first book, *On Native Grounds*, I was baffled by the angry despair Bliven had fomented in all my predecessors. Once, when I asked him what he thought of Wilson's writing, Bliven roared back, "What do I think of Edmund Wilson? I think, God damn it, that Edmund Wilson is the best critic in the English-speaking world!"

Wilson had actually been fired from the paper after an unsuccessful effort to oust Bliven. "I'm a terrible conspirator," Wilson unnecessarily told me in the 1960s when he gave me his account. My hazy impression of the farcical in-office putsch was that there had been a bitter Bliven-Wilson dispute after the order had gone out from the now-English Dorothy Whitney Straight Elmhirst for the paper to reverse its between-the-wars isolationism and support Britain's war against Hitler.

Wilson, like Charles Beard and other distinguished leftovers of the Progressive period who had never recovered from what John Dos Passos even as a right-winger still called "Mr. Wilson's War," saw Pearl Harbor as a plot by Roosevelt. When I first met my literary hero in 1942, he was at a low ebb, had difficulties getting review assignments because of his grumbling about the war, but was now as distant from the Lenin he had admired in *To the Finland Station* as he was from any enthusiasm for FDR, TNR's "leader of the free world." In the perverse introduction he tacked on to his great book on the literature of the Civil War, *Patriotic Gore* (1962), Wilson managed to equate Lenin with Lincoln as dangerous nationalists. Bruce Catton said of *Patriotic Gore* that Wilson knew everything about the Civil War except "what it was for."

In 1942 he seemed not to know what Hitler's war was all about. He was frighteningly self-willed in the largest as well as the most trivial matters. He supposed that his great literary powers and extraordinary personal culture—unmatched by any professor I knew—entitled him to make sweeping judgments about things beyond his heart. Betty Huling, the briskly competent, loud-swearing copy editor in my day, said of Wilson (whom she adored) that he was "hard as a diamond." Wilson actually wrote that Jews were wrong to support the war against Hitler as they did, since the "extermination" of the Jews was "far advanced" by the time we entered the war.

Bliven could not have cared less about his young book editor's literary passions. But he made no objection when, in 1943, I was able to break the sterile division between "front" and "back" by using the greater part of the paper to honor the centenary of William and Henry James with essays by William Troy, Irwin Edman, Philip Rahv, Jacques Barzun, and myself. When Allen Tate challenged me to publish his "More Sonnets at Christmas" (Tate was well on his way to Catholicism, scornful of war-pride and the liberal delusion that the most terrible slaughter in history would ease the way to the liberal utopia), Bliven strongly objected. Tate, the almost professional Confederate and "agrarian," famous for describing the whole modern industrial world as an infamy and America as well on the way to becoming another imperial Rome, aroused every possible antipathy in the agonized liberal Bliven. Since TNR was shouting on its cover BEWARE A STATIC WAR! he found as much to object to in Tate's scorn as he did in the syntactical complexity of Tate's verses. Even after I had dragged in Malcolm Cowley to support me, Bliven summed up for all the time the everlasting trouble between the "front" and the "back" of the book. "If I don't understand these poems," he told me, "how in hell do you expect our readers to understand them?"

BRUCE BLIVEN

I began to understand the difficulty Bliven had with my immediate predecessor, the English critic Nigel Dennis, who had departed in a fury. Literary editors after me, notably the great rescuer of refugees Varian Fry and the audacious young philosopher and novelist Isaac Rosenfeld, were to have the same sense of irony about Bliven and TNR that I developed. I was an uneasy book editor. There was always too much work rewriting reviews even by prominent people who did not seem to mind my remaking their drifting sentences. I understood Malcolm Cowley all too well when he lamented the amount of time he had spent in the old days rewriting that clumsy stylist John Dewey. Cowley for decades at a time had been the greatest influence on the "back"; his lead review each week, on such great books of the 1930s as Ignazio Silone's *Fontamara*, André Malraux's *Man's Fate*, and the poems of W. H. Auden, were among the most important events of the literary decade. I admired his gift of clear style far more than I did his support for the verdicts in the Moscow Trials. Cowley, who later repented for all this, believed in the "spirit of the age," the necessary progress of history, and could no more turn his back on his Stalinist friends than he could, in a pinch, think like John Dewey in that great book *Art As Experience*.

Cowley was notable in every way for personal presence and literary sophistication. I was too occupied with the horrors of war to take the TNR line seriously. The best thing about being book editor in 1942 and '43 was the procession into my cubicle of young Village poets and philosophers: Delmore Schwartz, William Barrett, Isaac Rosenfeld, Weldon Kees. Saul Bellow wandered in one day, astonishing me by his brilliance and his belief in the fame that awaited him. The Italian Jewish critic Paolo Milano became a lifelong teacher and friend. Europe's intellectual refugees, France's great painters—they were all over New York—and meeting Marc Chagall on 57th Street, hearing Béla Bartók's music for the first time, meant far more to me than the magazine that seemed to think of the war as a progressive war, a people's war, a lovable war. Stalin was everyone's "Uncle Joe." He was not mine.

Before too long, I was shattered by the news that Henrich Erlich and Victor Alter, the leaders of the "Bund," the Jewish Workers Party in Poland, had been shot by the Soviets, charged with "urging Soviet troops not to resist the Nazis, and urging an immediate peace treaty with Nazi Germany." After fleeing to Russia from the Nazi invasion of Poland, they had gladly endorsed the Anti-Fascist Peoples Committee of the day, designed to gain worldwide Jewish support for Russia, but had obviously opposed Stalin's determination to take Poland over completely after the war. How well I remember the memorial meeting for Erlich and Alter. There was a very sparse attendance; the only other writer I saw there was Murray Kempton. And it had only been because of the influence of William Green, the chief of the American Federation of Labor, and of Eleanor Roosevelt that we were privileged to know the fate of Erlich and Alter.

My most significant contribution to TNR in 1942-43 was a "J'Accuse," "In Every Voice and Every Ban," about the suicide letter in London of the Jewish Socialist Shmuel Ziegelboim, representing the Jewish Work-

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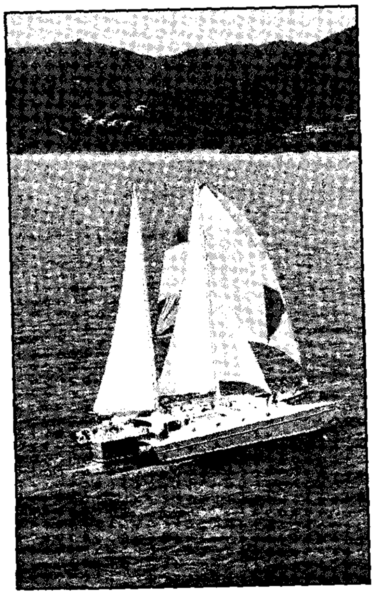

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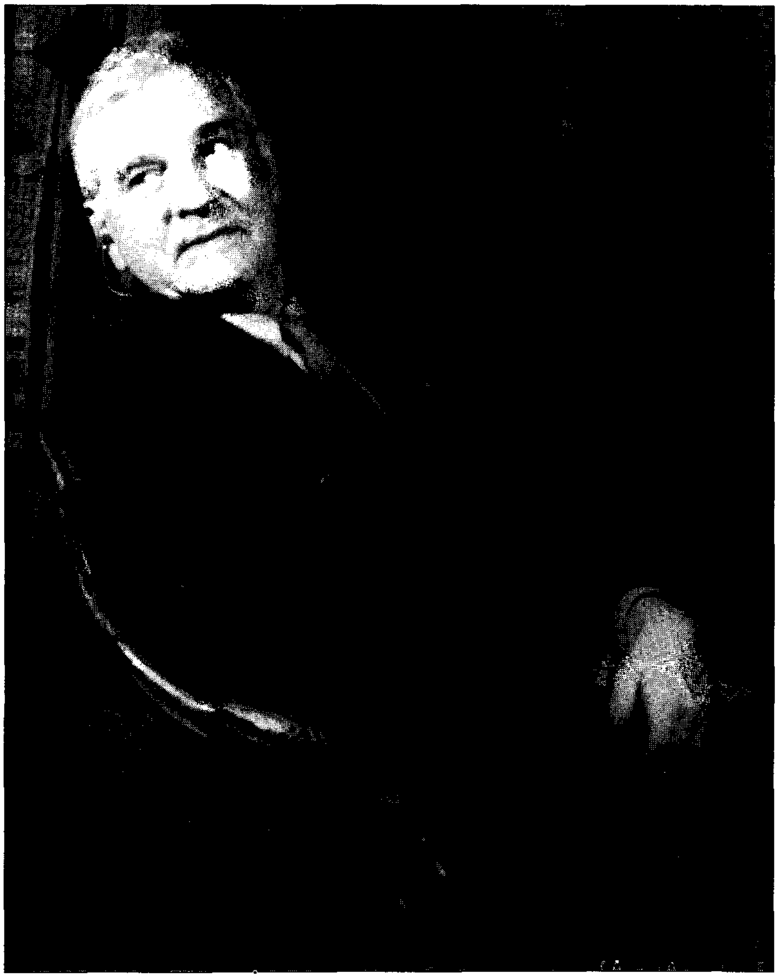
ers Bund in the Polish government-in-exile. Ziegelboim had been secreted out of Warsaw in order to bring the slaughter of the Jews to the attention of the world. In London he fell into such despair about his failure to reach general opinion that he wrote an extraordinary letter detailing the horror being visited upon his people and, on May 12, 1943, took his own life. I had never heard of Ziegelboim before finding his letter in an obscure corner of the *New York Times*. It changed my life, recharged my sense of myself as a Jew, but also gave me a lasting bitterness about "war aims" that did not heed this cry:



MALCOLM COWLEY

> . . . the Germans, with the most ruthless cruelty, are now murdering the few remaining Jews in Poland. Behind the ghetto's walls the last act of a tragedy unprecedented in history is being performed. The responsibility for this crime of murdering the entire Jewish population of Poland . . . is also a burden on the whole of humanity. . . .
>
> By the passive observation of the murder of defenseless millions, . . . these countries have become the criminals' accomplices. . . .
>
> I cannot be silent—I cannot live—while remnants of the Jewish people of Poland, of whom I am a representative, are perishing. My comrades in the Warsaw Ghetto took weapons in their hands on that last heroic impulse. It was not my destiny to die there together with them, but I belong to them, and in their mass graves. By my death I wish to express my strongest protest against the inactivity with which the world is looking on and permitting the extermination of my people. . . .

To this I added, "Something has already been done—by us the bystanders as well as the Nazi killers—that will never be undone. . . . The people who have been most indifferent to the massacre of the Jews will be just those who wonder why all the pacts and all the formal justice will have done so little to give them their pre-war 'security' again.

"You who want only to live and let live, to have the good life back—and think that you can dump three million Jews into the furnace, and sigh in the impotence of your undeniable regret, and then build Europe back again! Where so great a murder has been allowed, no one is safe."

Since I was physically out of the war and wanted desperately to get overseas, I accepted an invitation from Henry Luce's minions to join *Fortune*. Luce had actually once written for TNR, but his letter ended, "When you have finished your apprenticeship on THE NEW REPUBLIC, come to us." I finally got overseas under higher auspices.

After the 1940s my connection with TNR was sporadic. There was a long period in which I read it out of habit, was never asked to write for it, and was the subject of atrocious all-out attacks by Joseph Heller and Richard Poirier. I didn't write for the paper again until Martin Peretz bought it in 1974. And it was with pleasure that, when Peretz's first literary editor, Roger Rosenblatt, asked me to review a new edition of the correspondence of John and Abigail Adams, I wrote my first review in years and felt I was sort of home again.

Still, I have to say that the division I see every week between the "real world" and mere literature looks more useless than ever. The intelligence displayed in the back of the book is of the highest order, reminding me of the great pieces from 1914 on that helped to foment and shape "American moderns." Robert Frost, in despair of finding a hearing in his own country, went to England before World War I. He found on his return a magazine he had never heard of, with a review in it of *North of Boston* (February 20, 1915) by Amy Lowell, applauding "the most American volume of poetry which has appeared for some time." An impassioned sympathy with creative talent rather than the usual frigid critical showmanship distinguishes the remarkable pieces Leon Wieseltier has run: Edward Rothstein on the art of Glenn Gould, Derek Walcott on V. S. Naipaul, Joseph Brodsky's Nobel lecture, David Denby on Primo Levi, Breyten Breytenbach on "The South African Wasteland," and Wieseltier's own essay on David Grossman and the crisis of Israeli liberalism.

What Wieseltier cannot do is bring back the days before the million-dollar advances, the deafening stupid hype, the "Today" show for the promotion of manufactured big sellers. Books die today faster than ever, and in greater numbers, without anyone particularly noticing or caring. It is impossible today to run something like "Books That Changed Our Minds," a great feature in TNR of the late 1930s. That symposium illustrated an influence, a shaping, a lasting, an ideal of minds working on minds such as seminal books used to accomplish in the happy seedtime of, yes, the terrible 1930s, when people *knew* that the existing culture was a quicksand. Amos Oz's complaint against American Jewish writers (excepting Saul Bellow) applies to more than these writers: "You don't see the stars in their writing"—meaning that there is no elevation, no spiritual largeness. Our literary period may yet be remembered as one in which the book business replaced the literary world, in which literary theory replaced literature, and in which, as Irving Howe has said, Marxism came to its end—in the English Department.

As things go now, I cannot imagine ever appearing outside the literary section, for "culture" is not sufficiently recognized as an influence in itself. What I read in the front of the book is informative, saucy, in tone terribly sure of itself. It gives me no general enlightenment on the moral and intellectual crisis underlying the crisis of the week, above all no inspiration. There is no discernible social ideal behind all the clever counterpunching. Washington is more beautiful and imposing than it has ever been, is a wonderful town to look at—if you overlook Anacostia and Shaw. It always looks like Sunday; it can be a relief after openly decadent, bleeding New York. But like all company towns, it is parochial, and TNR reflects that, is too much occupied by and with town gossips. Except for government scientists, no real ideas ever *start* here. The many clever people in and out of government are not "intellectuals" in the old sense—thinkers with a sense of prophecy—but "experts," no-nonsense minds that can chill me. When I read in TNR that homeless people are invariably mental cases in need of treatment, I realize that economic frustration and hopelessness, the *real* bottom line, are to some privileged folks never a condition but, as Gertrude Himmelfarb put in the title of her book on poverty, "an idea."

I wish I could think of TNR as moving beyond post-leftist crowing—beyond a certain parvenu smugness, an excessive familiarity with the inside track and the inside dope, and, above all, beyond that devouring interest in other journalists that confines so many commentaries out of Washington to triviality. I wish I could think of TNR as moving beyond the bristling, snappy, reactive common sense of the disenchanted liberal. There are worlds within worlds, even in Washington, that are apparent more to writers—confined wherever they may be—than to the wearily clever, easily exasperated, heirs and guardians of the liberal democracy that is the one tradition we seem to have left. ●

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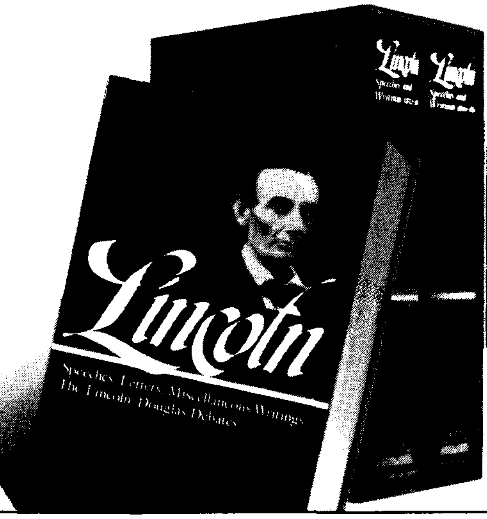
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The fresh message of 'progressive nationalism.'

HERBERT CROLY'S PROMISE

By John B. Judis

Herbert Croly was one of the most important American political philosophers of the 20th century. His main work, *The Promise of American Life*, published in 1909, anticipated the transition from competitive to corporate capitalism and from limited government to the Keynesian welfare state. Croly influenced Theodore Roosevelt (who borrowed his slogan the "New Nationalism" from him), Woodrow Wilson, and the architects of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. And the journal he founded in 1914, THE NEW REPUBLIC, was and is one of the most influential in America. Yet except by a handful of historians, Croly is ignored. *The Promise of American Life*, once a staple of political theory courses, is rarely taught. Even within THE NEW REPUBLIC, Croly's name has been virtually absent since he died in 1930.

Croly has been ignored partly because he does not fall within any recognizable niche. He was a political philosopher who made his living as a journalist and biographer. His writing was often difficult. In his lifetime, the long and repetitious *Promise of American Life* sold only 7,500 copies. And his philosophy has run counter to the prevailing assumptions of American politics. Croly believed that the promise of American life could only be realized through the energetic and creative use of public, governmental power. The laissez-faire right regarded him as a socialist, and the Marxist left saw him as a corporatist who, in historian Gabriel Kolko's words, "was really talking about a utopia led by an alliance of Wall Street and [Theodore] Roosevelt." Today, when politicians routinely blame taxation and government regulation for economic ills, Croly appears to be an anachronism. Yet what he had to say about early 20th-century America is painfully relevant to Ronald Reagan's and George Bush's America.

Croly was a slight man with a broad forehead, a large, flat nose, and small green eyes that looked painfully upon the world from behind rimless glasses. He was the antithesis of today's media personality: he was a highly private man, agonizingly shy, reluctant to speak before audiences. In his memoir of Croly, his NEW REPUBLIC colleague Edmund Wilson wrote:

> It was never easy for him to deal with people, and if the visitor himself were at all diffident, he would be likely to find the conversation subsiding into a discontinuous series of remarks more and more haltingly delivered by himself, to which Croly would mutter responses more and more fragmentary and more and more imperfectly audible.

In Croly's professional relations and in his writing, he strove for what he called "disinterestedness." He was passionate in his convictions, but he avoided the passions of the moment; he aspired to being beyond selfish interest, beyond faction or fashion, and beyond class or party. He wanted to bring a larger philosophical outlook to bear upon the most mundane details of politics. For the most part, he succeeded admirably.

Croly owed much of his philosophical outlook and originality to his father. David Goodman Croly was an independent-minded editor and journalist, continually embroiled in disputes with his publishers, and was the foremost American disciple of the French philosopher Auguste Comte. Herbert Croly, Wilson later remarked, was the first child christened in Comte's "religion of humanity."

Comte, a combination of French philosopher and Hegelian idealist, saw history as having passed from a theological to a metaphysical to a positivist stage. He identified the metaphysical with the French Revolution, which was based on an abstract concept of rights and equality, and the positivist with industrialization, which, Comte believed, would create a class of experts who would manage society scientifically through a centralized state. By drawing together society in a complex division of labor, industrialization would also supplant the prevailing egoism and individualism with a new altruism. Comte's managers and experts would run society in accordance with what he called the "religion of humanity," the slogan of which was "live for others."

David Croly tutored his sickly, retiring son in Comte's philosophy and, when Herbert went off to Harvard in 1886, kept careful track of his philosophical studies. At Harvard, under Josiah Royce's tutelage, Croly replaced Comte's religion of humanity with a more conventional Christian altruism, but he did not abandon the central tenets of Comte's thought. From Comte and from his

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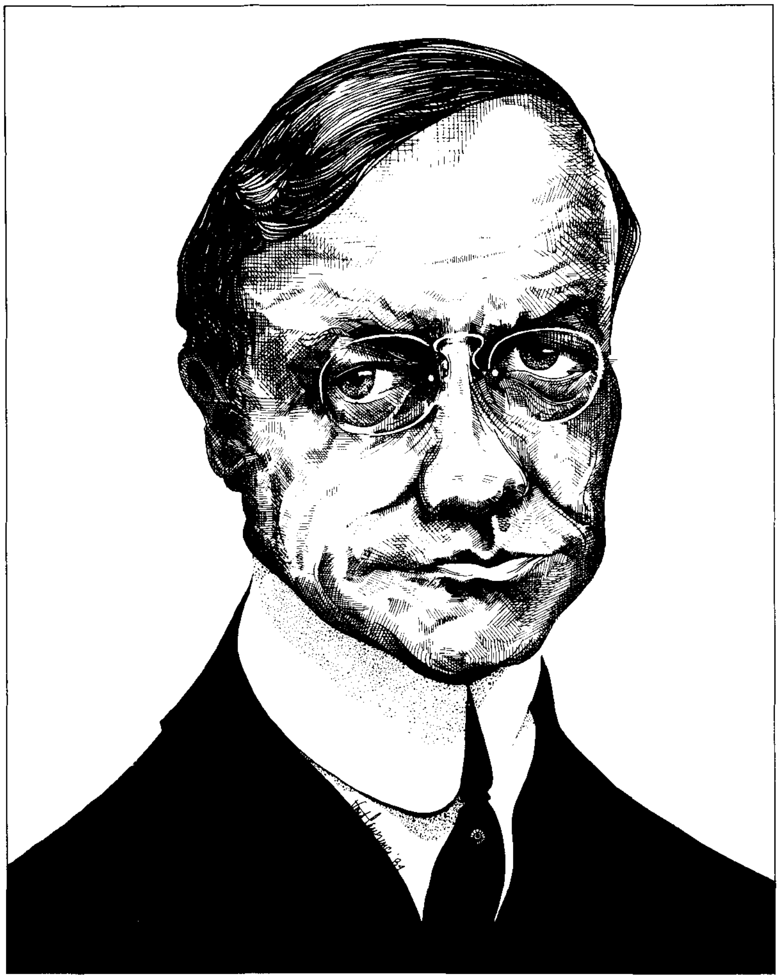
father, Croly retained his enthusiasm for industrialization and for the emergence of a new expert class committed to altruism and his disdain for the laissez-faire individualism that permeated American economics and philosophy.

In 1899, after finally leaving Harvard without a degree, Croly took a job as the editor of the *Architectural Record*, a publication owned by his father's former employer. Croly had no training as an architect, but over the six years he edited the magazine he developed considerable expertise as a critic. In 1905 Croly, who had married a women of moderate wealth, stepped down from full-time editorship and began to work on *The Promise of American Life*. The book, which came out when its author was 40 years old, was the ultimate contribution of the Progressive Era to American political thought, but it also transcended the ideological limitations of progressivism.


HERBERT CROLY BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

During the Progressive era—the period roughly from the end of the depression of the 1890s to World War I—America was transformed from a rural, agricultural nation to an urban, industrial one, and from a continental to a world power. These rapid changes not only created labor strife and political revolt but also undermined Americans' underlying view of themselves and their country. Through the 19th century, Americans had believed that their society held a unique promise of liberty and equality. Democracy could be secured, Thomas Jefferson and his successors had argued, through widespread and roughly equal ownership of property. But industrialization and the exhaustion of cheap, Western lands subverted that vision. Americans were left with an ideological void at the center of their politics—one that has never been filled.

Like the middle-class progressive reformers, Croly condemned the growing division between rich and poor. He contended that "gross inequalities in wealth, wholly divorced from economic efficiency on the part of the rich" were threatening the "social bond" upon which democracy rests. But he broke with the prevailing progressive solution to industrial ills. Where the progressives favored dismantling the giant corporations that had begun to dominate the economy, Croly favored harnessing their economic power through governmental action. Where the progressives sought through trust-busting to reaffirm Jeffersonian individualism, Croly sought to reject it in favor of what he called a "new nationalism."

Croly argued, paradoxically, that the reformers' Jeffersonian philosophy was partly to blame for the very conditions they sought to alleviate. Jeffersonian individualism entailed encouraging business to seek its rewards regardless of the social results. "The traditional American confidence in individual freedom has resulted in a morally and socially undesirable distribution of wealth," he wrote.

Croly wanted to preserve the new corporations. "The public has nothing to gain," he noted, "from the mutilation or destruction of these nationalized economic institutions. It should seek, on the contrary, to preserve them, just insofar as they continue to remain efficient; but it should at the same time seek the better distribution of the fruits of this efficiency." Croly was a democratic Hamiltonian. "The hope of automatic democratic fulfillment must be abandoned," he wrote. "The national government must step in and discriminate; not on behalf of liberty and the special individual, but on behalf of equality and the average man."

Croly advocated a host of measures, some of which were adopted later by Democratic administrations. He called for national labor legislation and corporate recognition of unions, a sharply graduated inheritance tax, and national chartering and regulation of corporations. He distrusted mixed forms of ownership in which the government and private managers jockeyed for control. He preferred indirect regulation through taxation or, in the case of a corporation becoming a genuine monopoly, outright appropriation.

Croly believed that campaigning for and carrying out these measures could itself change the way Americans understood their relations to each other and to government. It could teach Americans to become "public-spirited and disinterested." "The nation, like the individual, must go to school; and the national school is not a lecture hall or library," he wrote. "Its schooling consists chiefly in experimental collective action aimed at the realization of the collective purpose."

In *The Promise of American Life* Croly also rejected the populist and socialist solutions to the crisis of industrialization. If the progressives suffered from Jefferson's legacy, the populists and socialists suffered from Andrew Jackson's. The Jacksonian Democrats imbued Jefferson's utopian vision of political and economic equality with a vision of social equality, rooted in the experience of the American frontier. The Jacksonians championed the "average man" and men "successful in popular and remunerative occupations" and sought to suppress "the individuality which may reside in the gallant and exclusive devotion to some disinterested, and perhaps unpopular, moral, intellectual, or technical purpose."

Croly saw echoes of the Jacksonian disdain for excellence and expertise both in the Populist agitation for direct popular rule through initiatives and referenda and in the Socialist program for working-class control of government. If the socialists were ever to gain power, he wrote, "the action of a majority composed of the ordinary type of convinced socialists could and would in a few years do more to make socialism impossible than could be accomplished by the best and most prolonged efforts of a majority of malignant anti-socialists."

Following Comte, Croly believed that industrialization was creating managers, engineers, and other experts who were uniquely qualified to run society. But they were being discouraged from their natural vocation by the Jacksonian contempt for excellence and the Jeffersonian pursuit of individual gain. "The admirably competent individual cannot exercise any constructive social influence unless he becomes popular; and current American standards being what they are, how can an individual become popular without more or less insidious and baleful compromise? The gulf between individual excellence and effective popular influence still remains to be bridged."

In *The Promise of American Life* Croly placed his hopes for the adoption of the "new nationalism" on two different agents of change. First, he believed that he could win over the businessmen and lawyers who had backed civic reform and Theodore Roosevelt's candidacy for President. Croly was continually trying to convince them that they would be better off trusting their fate to national government than to "irresponsible radicals" who might win control of state governments.

Second, Croly placed hope for change in a political hero who could single-handedly reform American politics. Lincoln had been such a politician, and Croly held out similar hope for Theodore Roosevelt, who had just left office after two terms when *The Promise of American Life* appeared. Croly's enthusiasm increased when he received a glowing assessment of his book from the former President, and when Roosevelt adopted the "new nationalism" slogan from his book. But his hopes in Roosevelt and in a strong leader would prove as ill-founded as his hopes for enlightened corporate leaders.

Croly also thought that a national political transformation would be forced on America by the counrty's new global responsibilities. "It is entirely possible that hereafter the United States will be forced into the adoption of a really national domestic policy because of the dangers and duties incurred through her relations with foreign countries," he wrote. He was correct, of course, in believing that the United States was about to break with its isolationist past and that doing so would transform domestic politics. He was wrong, however, about the kind of transformation that America's new foreign commitments would bring.

Croly got a chance to put his program to the test in 1914. Willard Straight, a Wall Street financier, and his wife, Dorothy, who had admired *The Promise of American Life,* offered to finance a new political magazine that might counter the growing support for Woodrow Wilson and opposition to Theodore Roosevelt's Progressive Party among the opinion journals. The new magazine, called THE NEW REPUBLIC, came out in November. It quickly became a publishing success, its circulation climbing from 2,500 to 45,000 in four years. But its original program eventually foundered on the same assumptions about political change that had weakened Croly's case in *The Promise of American Life.*

THE NEW REPUBLIC began publishing four months after World War I had broken out in Europe. Croly hoped that the threat of American involvement would impart a new urgency to national politics and lay the groundwork for the kinds of reforms he had proposed in his book. In the magazine's first editorial, he wrote that the crisis created by the war "should bring with it a political and economic organization better able to redeem its obligations at home."

Croly and the other editors also thought that the war could produce a settlement that would make future wars unlikely and that would promote progressive democracy abroad. They pressed the Wilson administration to prepare for the possibility of war and to adopt a diplomatic policy aimed at "peace without victory." When Wilson appeared to endorse their strategy and began to seek their advice on domestic as well as foreign policy, they became enthusiastic backers of his administration. In 1916 Croly broke with Theodore Roosevelt, who was endorsing the Republican ticket, and endorsed Wilson. When Congress declared war on Germany in April 1917, the magazine heartily endorsed the decision. (See "War Against Reason" by Henry Fairlie, page 58.)

As the Wilson administration, under the pressure of war, introduced precisely those measures of industrial planning advocated in *The Promise of American Life*, Croly began to cast Wilson himself in the role he had reserved for Lincoln and Roosevelt and to position the magazine as an administration house organ. Croly told Wilson's adviser Colonel House that the magazine's editors wanted to "be the faithful and helpful interpreter of what seems to us to be one of the greatest enterprises ever undertaken by an American President."

But the war's end disillusioned Croly. When he read the final terms of the Versailles peace settlement—which he believed laid the groundwork for future war rather than peace—he went into seclusion for three days. He emerged to denounce Wilson, the war, and the terms of the peace. As the administration began to dismantle the domestic reforms it had introduced in the war and as Wilson's Attorney General fomented a "Red scare," Croly grew even more disillusioned. In 1920, facing an election between a Republican reactionary, Warren Harding, and a Democratic conservative, Croly endorsed the Farmer-Labor Party candidate and plunged THE NEW REPUBLIC into left-wing opposition—a stance from which it would not waver for the next 40 years.

In an October 1920 article, "The Eclipse of Progressivism," Croly abandoned the theory of political change that he had advanced in *The Promise of American Life* and in THE NEW REPUBLIC. He rejected both the quest for a new Lincoln (Wilson, Croly wrote, had "shattered what was left of American progressivism as a coherent body of conviction") and for enlightened business leadership. To counter the "autocratic authority" of the "business class," he called for strengthening the ability of "the wage-earners to resist capitalist domination." Departing from Comte's model of government by experts, Croly also called for "the participation of the workers in the management of industry as an essential part of a democratic industrial policy and of democratic education for citizenship."

Croly's leftward turn consigned him and THE NEW REPUBLIC to the margins of politics and publishing in the 1920s. The journal's circulation dropped below 15,000 by 1923. Despairing of politics, Croly himself turned increasingly to pondering the role of religion in healing what he called "the sickness of civilization." When he wrote of current politics, he would express his contempt for the greed and complacency that engulfed official Washington. It was a period, he wrote, when "Americanism itself became popularly confused with a combination of optimism, fatalism, and conservatism." Unlike other progressives, Croly never romanticized Soviet or American communism. He held out for an alternative to both individualism and Marxist socialism and communism.

Croly died in 1930, a year after the Great Depression had commenced. David Levy and Charles Forcey, the two historians who have very ably rendered Croly's life and thought, see Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal as a vindication of Croly's philosophy. But there were significant differences between what Roosevelt accomplished and what Croly prescribed in *The Promise of American Life* and in his later books and articles.

Croly always insisted that it was necessary not simply to enact laws, but to change popular understanding. Franklin Roosevelt rarely tried to present the New Deal as a departure from past American politics and philosophy. Roosevelt's evocation of the "forgotten man" and his attacks against "economic royalists" sounded more like Jackson than Croly. Although Roosevelt and the New Deal left an institutional legacy, they failed in the end to supplant Jeffersonian individualism with a more positive conception of public life and the government's role. A decade later, in a noted study of public opinion, sociologists Hadley Cantril and Lloyd Free would discover that Americans had remained "ideologically conservative" even after having become "operationally liberal."

Moreover, although some of the New Deal programs echoed Croly's earlier proposals, Roosevelt did not initiate what Croly called "social" and "industrial" democracy. In "The Eclipse of Progressivism," Croly had stressed the limitations of "welfare legislation, compulsory arbitration, or any other expedient which ignores the need of the wage-earning workers for the independence and dignity which must come from substantial economic power and social responsibility."

Croly's program of progressive nationalism and industrial democracy remains unenacted, but by the same token it is even more needed now. Like the 1920s, the decade of the 1980s has been a living demonstration of the perils of American individualism. The Reagan experiments in deregulation have not rejuvenated American industry or culture. The disparities between rich and poor have grown, America's industrial base has continued to erode, and national purpose, though temporarily infused with militaristic jingoism, has continued to flag exactly where it matters most—in the commitment to rebuilding our cities and industry and to reviving our educational system. As in the 1920s, political thought has been filled with sentimental appeals to a golden past, while politics has become a plaything of professionals and demagogues, devoted to issues that stir voters but are peripheral to the nation's underlying problems.

In 1909 America's addiction to pioneer individualism and laissez-faire economics threatened its democratic promise. Now it also imperils the country's ability to compete economically with other countries. What Herbert Croly called for—the renewal of national spirit through democratically controlled government action—continues to deserve the thoughtful consideration of all Americans. ●

BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Concurrent Lives

This journal was founded less than 20 years after the first public showings of film—in Berlin and Paris (1895), in London and New York (1896). Thus TNR has existed through more than three-quarters of the entire 95-year presence of film in the world, a fact that is all the more striking when we consider the impossibility of such a comparison with other arts. This unique relation means, from my point of view, that a look back at the magazine's life so far impels a look back at film's concurrent life.

The overview begins, naturally, with birth. The birth of film has two salient characteristics. First, it was opportune, even imperative. As historians have noted, the 19th-century theater provides plenty of evidence that it was moving toward film—almost wishing for it to be invented—with the profusion of stage effects, scenery, and lighting that struggled against the physical limitations of the stage. In other arts, too, there was evidence of what might be called cinematic anticipation. Dickens, said Sergei Eisenstein in a famous essay, is a prime example. Of the kettle at the beginning of *The Cricket on the Hearth*, Eisenstein wrote: "Movies were also boiling in that kettle. . . . This kettle is a typical Griffith-esque close-up." As for painting, Anne Hollander maintains in a recent book that northern European painting was proto-cinematic from the 15th century on. The arrival of film seems to have satisfied some centuries of unconscious longing. No wonder that the new art flamed to global success.

In another view, film could hardly have arrived at a worse time. The turn of the century brought immense changes, and World War I intensified those changes much further. By the war's end, one could say soberly what had often been said hyperbolically: the world would never be the same. Politics, social protocols, private teleologies had altered violently. Inevitably, change also reached and shook the domains of art; every art found itself reassessing its views of tradition and procedure. The histories of painting and music, of literature and theater and dance can all be divided easily into periods before and after World War I. Often this postwar turmoil was exciting and fruitful—for the theater in Moscow, for painting in Paris—but it was fruitful in arts that had thousands of previous years of life behind them, which could serve either as reassurance or as impulse to rejection.

Into this hurly-burly film was launched—without precedents of its own. Of course it did not arrive naked. The older arts, including still photography, provided it with a considerable legacy. But the essences of cinema itself, the sheerly cinematic, had to be found and refined at a time when, happily or not, the artistic world was whirling.

To some extent this creation of cinema was mimetic. Obviously, the theater was a chief source. People seated in rows facing in one direction would expect stories performed by actors, stories that moved in shapes that corresponded somehow to theatrical experience. Less obviously, the novel was a huge structural influence. Film was the place where the multistranded and often interior action of the novel could be blended with theater. This new symbiosis seems one of the film form's adventurous responses to the revolutionary decades in which it arrived.

Another factor, I believe, also figured strongly. The evolution of cinematic technique and goals was connected to an element that persisted through those changing times—an indefinable quality, dangerous to generalize about but always apprehensible: national character. That Edwin S. Porter and D. W. Griffith were the pioneers who developed ideas of editing and camera movement—crosscutting between story strands to evoke simultaneity, dollying the camera so that for the first time in history the audience as well as the actors could move—seems related to the fact that both men worked in the youngest of the powerful nations, a country full of impatience and energy, endowed with space and hungry for action to fill it.

Those American film ideas were seized abroad, most eagerly by Eisenstein and Pudovkin and Dovzhenko and their colleagues, who in the early 1920s believed that the arrival of the Soviet Union marked the culmination of mankind's upward struggle and that the film medium—along with American film

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Do the Right Thing. *Disturbing but not to be missed. An ordinary day and terrible night in a black street in Brooklyn. Written and directed by the gifted Spike Lee, who also plays a leading role. (Reviewed 7/3/89)* **High Fidelity.** *A lovely documentary about the Guarneri Quartet. Not a concert film: the film accompanies the four men as they travel, rehearse, live, perform. Directed by Allan Miller, himself a schooled musician. (9/18&25/89)* **sex, lies, and videotape.** *Steven Soderbergh's exceptional sensitivity makes this inquiry into the sexual ambience of four young people a delicate, haunting experience. (9/4/89)* **When Harry Met Sally. . . .** *Visual candy. Aural, too. Bright stuff about Manhattan dating. Its chorus of older folks and the old songs on the sound track fix a contrasting earlier attitude toward romance. (8/21/89)* **—SK**

grammar—had arrived just in time to help them celebrate this new, glorious life on earth.

Italy was where the first really long films were made, such as *Quo Vadis?*, which ran two hours, and *Cabiria*, which was twice as long. Compared with the usual 12- to 24-minute film of the day, these works seemed much more gigantic than they do now; and they seemed the synesthetic transmutation of Italian gifts for opera. In France film soon made its way into modes that had charm, both genuine and contrived. In Sweden the northern saga tradition charged early films with epic ambition. In Germany a principal impulse was to construct a world as defense against the chaotic world: streets, towns, cities were built within roofed studios as if with a wish to shut out chaos, to reinstate design and control.

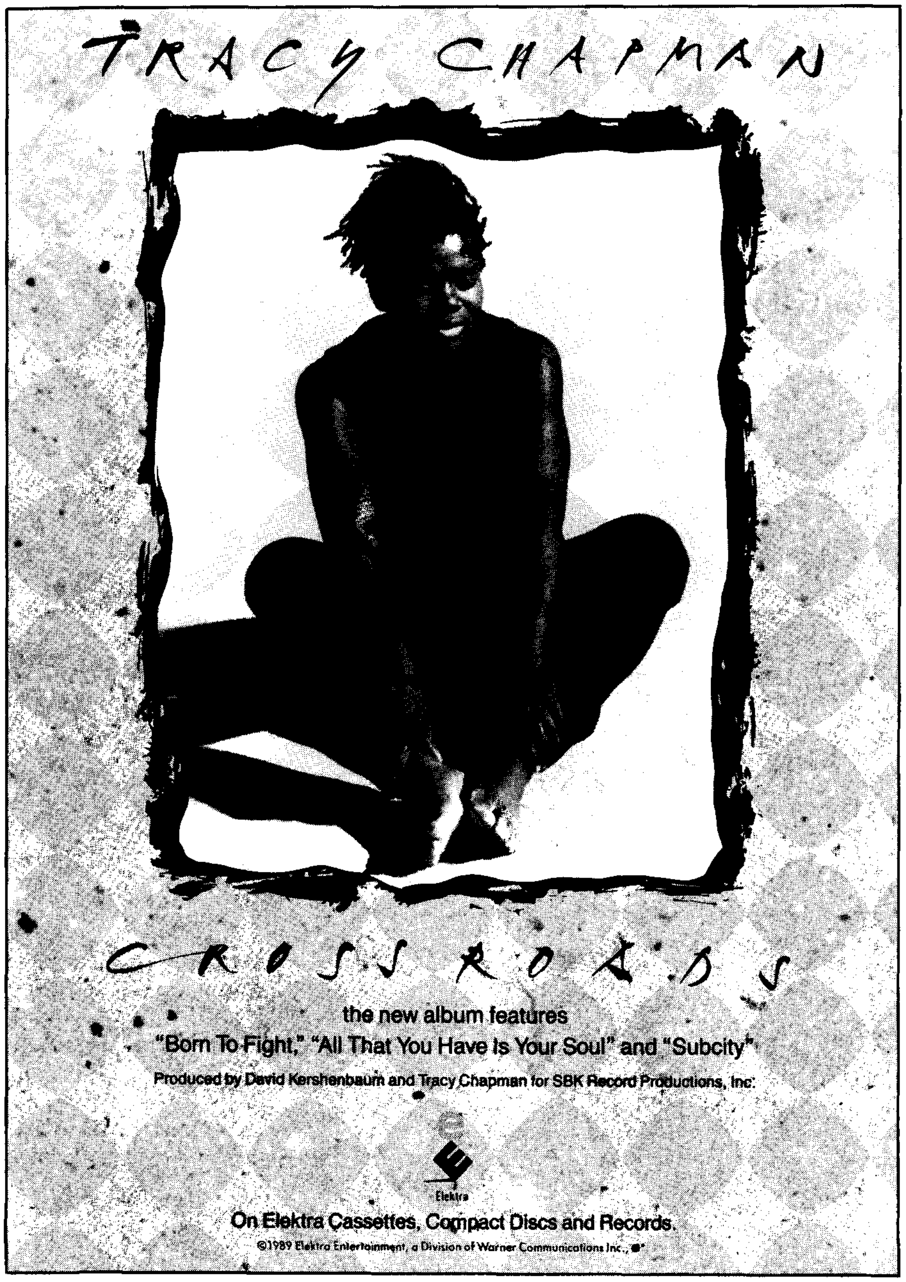
Other influences, of course, shaped film's development, and there was diversity within every country; but it's astonishing to see how quickly films began to take on national colors and developed artistic means to use them cinematically. As early as November 1908 the *New York Dramatic Mirror* carried a long article called "Earmarks of Makers," distinguishing American from foreign films, distinguishing studios within several countries. In any case, during the first 20 or 25 years of its existence, film found ways to attain native authenticity and worldwide appeal. It was an extraordinary cultural achievement.

After we have looked at the beginnings, what can we say today about the results? What has film accomplished since then? Once, after a meeting in which films were glowingly discussed, a well-known poet challenged me to name one film that was the equal of the greatest work in other arts, the work of Sophocles or Dante or Michelangelo or Bach or Tolstoy. The answer was, is, double. First, there is no such film. There may never be such a film. Second, who is the Sophocles or Bach of the 20th century? Great artists there have certainly been in our time, and I would not blithely equate even the best films I know with the work of Joyce or Picasso. But few would rank Joyce or Picasso or the other masters of our time with the greatest artists in history; and the overwhelming fact is that, arriving in this century that has been stormy even for the oldest arts, film has created hundreds of works that are now part of the cultural legacy of every civilized human being.

Further, it is in one inexorable way harder to do good work in film than in any other art because, possibly excepting architecture, film is the most expensive art. Those hundreds of first-rank films were made against great circumstantial odds. Orson Welles said that anyone who discusses film and doesn't mention money is a jackass. Another way to put it: every achievement in film is in some measure a triumph over the conditions of filmmaking. (When we admire certain foreign films and wonder why America can't make comparable films, we might remember that, to my knowledge, this is the only significant filmmaking country in the world that does not, one way or another, help to subsidize film production.) Films, especially the corporate-born work of Hollywood, are so costly that a critic sometimes feels that he is clawing at the outside of General Motors.

These money-heavy circumstances of film have led to an aesthetic condition: the dominance of realism. (I'm speaking here only of fiction films; documentaries are an important but quite different subject.) Certainly there are droves of science-fiction, fantasy, and horror pictures and a lesser quantity of animated films; but those are genres aimed at an audience that attends them as alternatives to, sometimes as parodies of, mainstream realistic films. None but the saturated aficionado would hold that those genres are the center of film style. Realism—allowing for exceptions—dominates: it is the mode of art most clearly appreciated by most people and therefore the most marketable.

This has been a limitation, as compared with the contemporary theater, but not an imprisonment. If most films have been made realistically, some have made artistic capital out of that condi-



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tion. *Citizen Kane*, *The Searchers*, *L'Avventura*, *Senso*, *Ikiru*, *Tokyo Story*, *Diary of a Country Priest*, *La Grande Illusion*, *The Passion of Anna*—even young Steven Soderbergh's *sex, lies, and videotape*—show something of the range of temperaments and aspirations that realism can accommodate.

Another benefit—enforced, perhaps, but still a benefit—has been the refinement of film acting. The realism of film is much more intense than that of the theater because of the audience—not the audience as a group, but one individual viewer. The camera eye is vicar for one person. This has produced a kind of acting that often sulks in slurring vernaculars of speech and movement but that at its best can range from theatrical largeness as it fits film's needs (Vittorio De Sica in *General della Rovere*) across to sheer interiority (again, Vittorio De Sica in *General della Rovere*). In this country, even when a film as a whole has left an aching lot to be desired, performances within it have sometimes attained a beauty of their own. A few examples: Paul Newman in *The Verdict*, Dustin Hoffman and Jon Voight in *Midnight Cowboy*, Meryl Streep in *Sophie's Choice*, Jane Fonda in *Comes a Horseman*. Perceiving the limits and methods of film, these and other actors have turned intimate realism into a kind of liberation.

Films have greatly amplified a power that the theater had and, in lesser degree, still has. A personal instance. When I was a high school senior, I took a girl named (let's say) Jean Miller to a party, a nice forthright girl who all evening long was nice, forthright Jean Miller. I took her home after the party, and at her front door I kissed her good night; and as our faces moved together, I saw Jean Miller become Joan Crawford. It was at that moment, I suppose, that I first became clear about what had been happening in my own daydreams (in which I was usually Richard Dix) and in those of many others. Within every sentient being on the face of the earth—or at any rate so many of them that the claim is tenable—films are part of his or her dreams and daydreams. This is often true of other arts; it is always true of films.

President or pope, farmer or financier, saleswoman or soprano, somewhere in each of us there is a privacy that only films have reached. This is an ecumenism more universal than most religions. No one would maintain that this power of film is entirely good; still, whatever our other allegiances, we are all citizens of that secret kingdom.

It is awesome to remember that virtually all of the events and achievements mentioned above—and mountains more that are omitted—came about within 75 years. This is an impressively long time for a vigorously opinionated journal but an impressively brief time for an art that, one way or another, has affected most of the human race.

Poetry, myth, and revolution.

Time's Voice

By Octavio Paz

At the dawn of the modern age, confronted by a spectacle that has been repeated many times since then—by the spectacle of the tyrant disguised as the liberator—Chateaubriand wrote these prophetic words:

> The Revolution would have carried me along . . . but I saw the first head on the end of a pike, and I recoiled. I will never see an argument for liberty in murder; I know of nothing more servile, more cowardly, more obtuse than a terrorist. And later, did I not find that entire race of Brutuses in the service of Caesar and his police?

Ever since my adolescence I have written poems, and I still write them. I wanted to be a poet and nothing but a poet. In my books of prose I meant to serve poetry, to justify and to defend it, to explain it to others and to myself. I soon discovered that the defense of poetry, scorned in our century, was inseparable from the defense of liberty. That is the source of my interest in the political and social questions that have shaken our time. After the Second World War, I met André Breton and his friends; I do not share many of his philosophical and aesthetic ideas, but my admiration is still alive and intact: in his writings, as in his life, liberty and poetry have the same fiery face, at once seductive and tempestuous. Like Chateaubriand at the other end of the spectrum, he never mistook the tyrant for the liberator.

Liberty is not a philosophy and it is not even an idea. It is a movement of consciousness that leads us, at certain moments, to utter one of two monosyllables: Yes or No. In that instantaneous brevity, which is similar to a flash of lightning, the contradictory sign of human nature is vividly limned.

Throughout history, and under the most diverse circumstances, poets have participated in political life. I do not refer to poetry as an art in the service of a state, of a church, of an ideology. We already know that this concept of poetry, as old as political and ideological power, has invariably produced the same results: states fall, churches break apart or petrify, ideologies vanish, but poetry remains.

No, I refer to the free participation of the poet in civic life. Even in societies that did not know political liberty, such as ancient China, not a few poets contributed to the administration of public affairs. Many among them did not hesitate to censure the abuses of the Son of Heaven, and many suffered imprisonment, exile, and other penalties for their opinions. In the West, this tradition has been intense; I need hardly recall the poets of Greece and Rome. Two of the greatest poets of our tradition, the Florentine Dante and the Englishman Milton, were notable political thinkers; to the first we owe the treatise *On Monarchy*, and to the second the daring arguments in favor of freedom of conscience—his celebrated defense of the right to divorce, his criticism of the censorship decreed by Parliament, which he had the courage to expound before Parliament itself.

Still, these historical precedents should not hide from us the fact that there is an essential difference between these attitudes and the situation of modern poets. The Chinese poets censured the throne, but they belonged to the imperial bureaucracy. Almost all of them were high officials, and their censure formed part of the moral and intellectual tradition of Confucianism. Dante and Milton found themselves engaged in controversies in which politics could not be distinguished from religion. For both of them, the foundation for their opinions lay in theology. They fought in this world with their eyes fixed on the next, with reasoning that came from eternity. Dante placed Brutus and Cassius, two

OCTAVIO PAZ is the author most recently of *Sor Juana: Or, the Traps of Faith* (Harvard University Press). A version of this essay was given as a lecture in June in Paris, where the author was awarded the Tocqueville Prize.

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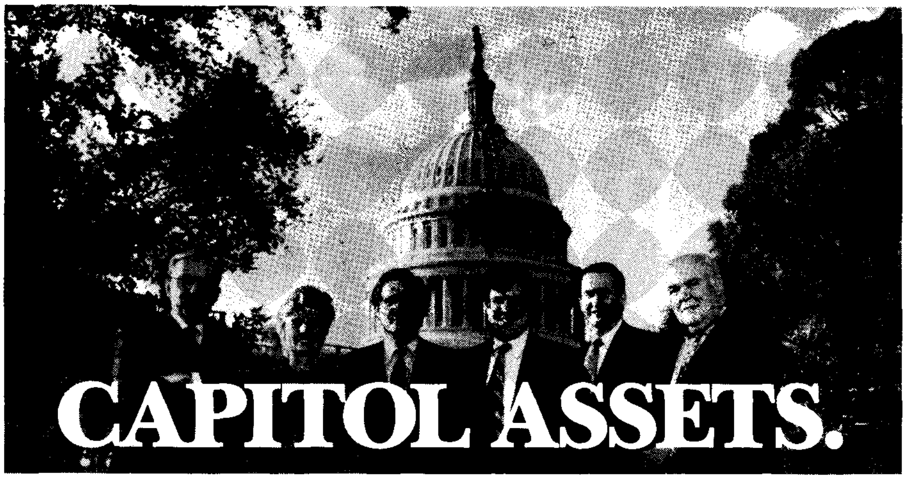
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enemies of the empire, in the last circle of Hell, at the side of the archtraitor Judas Iscariot; for him, this world was a copy of the more real, transmundane reality, and political crimes were to be judged by the divine tribunal.

In the Greek city-states, by contrast, and in the Roman Republic, the influence of religion was not so great. The questions that divided citizens were clearly political, untinged by theology. And yet our similarity to Greco-Roman antiquity is also deceptive. It lacks a central element, the distinctive sign that marks the birth of the modern age: the idea of revolution. That is an idea that could not emerge except in our time, for it is the heir of both Greece and Christianity—that is, of philosophy and the longing for redemption.

In no other historical period has the idea of revolution possessed that power of magnetic attraction. Other civilizations and other societies experienced immense changes—uprisings, the fall of dynasties, fratricidal wars—but only their great religious upheavals can be compared to our fascination with revolution. It is an idea that has hypnotized many minds and several generations for over two centuries. The North Star that guided our pilgrimages, the secret sun that illumined and warmed the sleepless nights of many solitary people, in it the certainties of reason and the hopes of religious movements have been conjoined.

From the moment it appeared on the horizon of history, revolution had a dual nature: it was reason made act and it was an act of providence—rational determination and miraculous action, history and myth. Criticism, the child of reason in its most rigorous and lucid form, is its image—at once creative and destructive, or rather, it creates as it destroys. Revolution is that moment when criticism is transformed into utopia and utopia is incarnated in a few men and in an action. The descent of reason to earth was a true epiphany. It was lived as such by its protagonists, and later by its interpreters: lived, and not thought.

For almost all of them, revolution was a *consequence of certain rational postulates*, or reason, and of the general evolution of society. Almost none of them suspected that they were present at a resurrection. The newness of revolution seems absolute; it breaks with the past and establishes a rational and just regime that is radically different from the old one. And yet this absolute newness is seen and experienced as a return to first beginnings.

Revolution is the return to the time of origins, before injustice, before that moment when, as Rousseau says, a man marked out the limits of a piece of land and said, "This is mine." On that day inequality began; and with it discord and oppression, which is to say, history.

In short, revolution is an eminently historical act that negates history. The new time that it initiates is a restoration of original time. As the child of history and reason, revolution is the offspring of linear, successive, and unrepeatable time. As the child of myth, revolution is a moment in cyclical time, like the movement of the stars and the round of seasons. The nature of revolution, then, is dual. We cannot think it except by separating its two elements and discarding the mythic as a foreign body, and we cannot live it except by uniting them. We think it as a phenomenon that responds to the prognostications of reason; we live it as a mystery. The fascination of revolution lies in this enigma.

The modern age broke the ancient link that joined poetry and myth—only to immediately join poetry to revolution, to the idea that proclaimed the end of myth and thus became the central myth of modernity. The history of modern poetry, from romanticism until our day, has been nothing but the history of its relations with that myth, which is as clear and coherent as a proof in geometry, as turbulent as the revelations of ancient chaos. Inflamed, extreme relations, ranging from seduction to horror, from devotion to anathema, from idolatry to abjuration—the entire gamut of the two great passions, love and religion.

Holderlin's enthusiasm for the young Bonaparte and his disillusion at seeing him converted into the Emperor Napoleon, Wordsworth's Girondist sympathies and the horror that Robespierre inspired in him, are only two examples of the drastic fluctuations in the response of German and English romantics to the French Revolution. These violent oscillations are repeated throughout the 19th century, in response to each revolutionary movement; they culminate in the 20th century with immense, successive waves of contradictory feelings—again, from fanaticism to repulsion—that the prolonged influence of the Bolshevik Revolution inspired all over the world.

The movements of adherence awakened by all revolutions can be explained, in the first place, by the need we humans feel to correct, and to put an end to, our unfortunate condition. There are periods when this need for redemption becomes more intense and more urgent, because of the disappearance of traditional beliefs. The old gods crumble, rotted by superstition, debased by fanaticism, corroded by criticism. The tribe of

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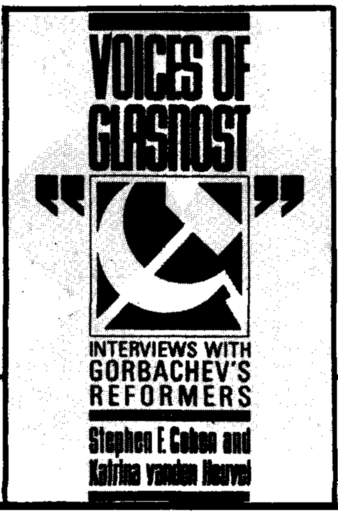
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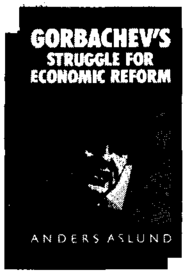

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phantoms begins to emerge among the ruins: they appear first as radiant ideas, but soon they are deified and converted into dreadful idols.

Although there are other explanations of the revolutionary phenomenon—economic, psychological, political—all of them, without being false, essentially depend on this basic fact. A faith that is born in the void left by old beliefs, that feeds on the consciousness of our misery as well as on the geometries of reason, is a tough, resistant faith. It obstinately closes its eyes to the incoherences of its doctrine and the atrocities of its leaders. In this respect, revolutionary faith resembles religious faith: neither the slaughter of September 1791, nor the butchery of Saint-Barthélemy, nor Stalin's concentration camps could shake the convictions of the faithful.

Still, there is a difference. Revolutionary beliefs are subject to the proof of time, while religious beliefs are inscribed in the next life, untouched by time and its changes. Revolutions are historical, temporal phenomena. And time's criticism is irrefutable, because it is reality's criticism: it shows without needing to demonstrate. And what it shows is that revolution begins as a promise, is squandered in violent agitation, and freezes into bloody dictatorships that are the negation of the fiery impulse that brought it into being. In all revolutionary movements the sacred time of myth is transformed inexorably into the profane time of history.

Hope is reborn after each failure. Shelley's enthusiasm refutes Coleridge's disenchantment; Heine writes *Concerning Germany* in response to Mme de Staël, to ridicule the poets of the previous generation who had initially shown sympathy for the French Revolution but who had become its enemies. The cycle of adherence-denial-adherence was repeated for more than two centuries, first in Europe, then throughout the world. And the poetic word has simultaneously been prophecy of, anathema to, and elegy for, modern revolutions.

Although the differences and contrasts between the two great revolutionary prototypes (the French Revolution of 1789 and the Russian Revolution of 1917) are greater and more profound than their similarities, the sentiments they inspired obeyed the same affective rhythm of attraction and repulsion. Despite the fact that the religious function of modern revolutions has invariably been crushed by the eminently historic nature of these movements, the result has been the rebirth of similar aspirations and chimeras in the following generation, or the adoption of personal mythologies.

This is another difference between modern poetry and poetry of the past. For Dante, the key to his poem was sacred scripture, the axis of universal analogy: but Blake invents a mythology out of scraps of gnosticism and the hermetic tradition. Many poets turned to the same recourse, and I hardly need recall the beliefs of Nerval or Hugo, or, in the 20th century, the theosophy of Yeats or the occultism of Breton. The reason for this apparent paradox is that the public religion of modernity has been revolution, but its private religion has been poetry.

The criticism of revolutions has been made by those nostalgic for the old order, and by liberals (in the broad sense of the word, which denotes not so much a doctrine as a philosophical and political disposition). As opposed to the reactionary criticism of revolutions, the liberal criticism of revolutions has been effective: it has dismantled the ideological constructs, pulled away their religious mask, revealed their historic, profane nakedness. Liberalism did not propose to replace those constructs with others. It is the very nature of this intellectual tradition to be critical—and this has prevented it, unlike other great political philosophies, from proposing a metahistory. This is a domain that once belonged to religion, but liberalism offered nothing in exchange, and limited religion to the private sphere. It based liberty on the only foundation that can sustain it: on autonomy of conscience, and on the recognition of the autonomy of conscience in others.

It was admirable, and it was terrible, too: for it locked us into a solipsism, broke the bridge that connected I to thou and both of them to the third person—to the other, to the others. Between liberty and fraternity there is no contradiction, but there is a distance. It is a distance that liberalism has not been able to abolish. Robespierre and Saint-Just wanted to base solidarity among citizens on virtue. But what is the foundation of virtue? The Jacobins, like their descendants the Bolsheviks, did not ask themselves this question. Or rather: their answer was virtue by decree, which is terror. And terror can engender only two irreconcilable fraternities: the executioners and the victims.

Democratic liberalism is a civilized mode of living together. In my opinion it is the best of all that political philosophy has conceived. But it leaves unanswered half of the questions that we humans ask ourselves about fraternity, about origins and final ends, about the meaning and the value of existence. The modern age has exalted individualism, and has been,

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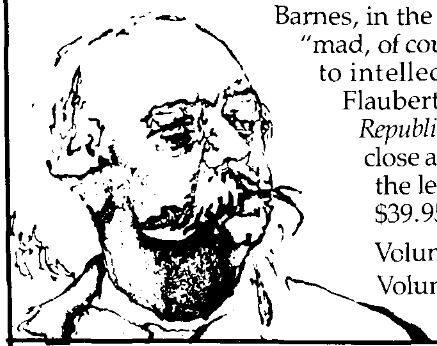

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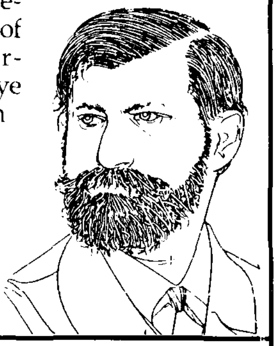

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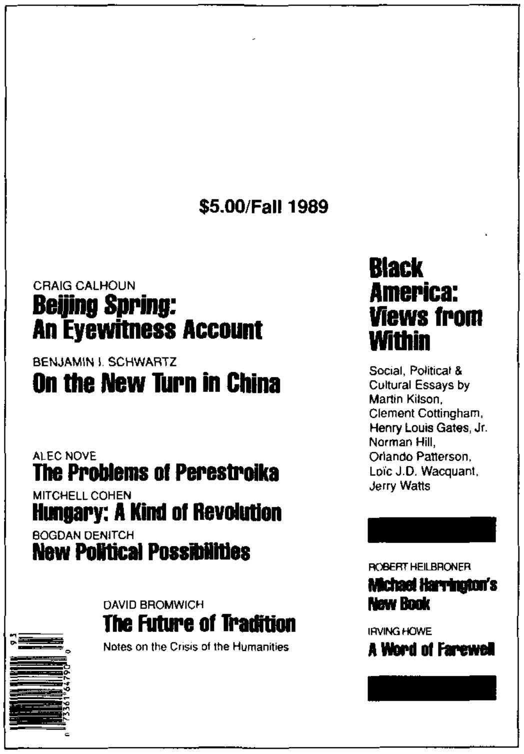
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therefore, the period of dispersed consciousness.

Poets have been particularly sensitive to this void. Baudelaire wrote in his journal, around 1851:

> The world will end. . . . I'm not saying it will be reduced to the buffoonish disorder of the South American republics or that perhaps we will return to savagery. . . . No: machinery will have so Americanized us and progress will have so completely atrophied our spiritual faculties that nothing, not even the bloody chimeras of the utopians, could possibly compare to those excellent results. . . . But universal ruin (or universal progress: the name doesn't interest me) will not manifest itself in political institutions, but rather in the debasement of our souls . . .

Ninety years later, as if he were continuing Baudelaire's reflections, in one of his *Four Quartets*, Eliot sees our world, which we think is moved by progress, as the interminable fall of the void into the void:

> O dark dark dark. They all go into the dark,
> The vacant interstellar spaces, the vacant
> into the vacant,
> The captains, merchants, bankers,
> eminent men of letters,
> The generous patrons of art, the
> statesmen and the rulers,
> Distinguished civil servants, chairmen of
> many committees,
> Industrial lords and petty contractors, all
> go into the dark,
> And dark the Sun and Moon, and the
> Almanach de Gotha
> And the Stock Exchange Gazette, the
> Directory of Directors,
> And cold the sense and lost the motive of
> action.
> And we all go with them, into the silent
> funeral,
> Nobody's funeral, for there is no one to
> bury.

I could adduce more texts, but the two I have cited are enough to illustrate the spiritual state of poets when confronted with the disasters of modernity. Baudelaire's reflections and Eliot's verses are a funereal counterpoint to the enthusiastic hymns of Whitman and Hugo. All of them are examples of the splitting, or the rending, of modern poetry, the mark that distinguishes it from the poetry of other times and other civilizations. Suspended between the two hands of time—between myth and history—modern poetry consecrates a fraternity that is different and older than that of religions and philosophies. It is a fraternity born of the same sense of solitude in primitive man surrounded by a strange and hostile nature. The difference is that now we live that solitude not only as we confront the cosmos, but as we confront our neighbors as well. Still, we know, each of us in our own room, that we are not really alone: fraternity arches over the void.

After a long period of political stagnation, always at the edge of the precipice, always facing the specter of a total war and the threat of annihilation of the human race, we have been witness in the last 20 years to a series of changes, to portents of a new era that may be dawning. First, the myth of revolution has declined in the very place of its birth, in Western Europe; today it is recovered from the war and prosperous, with a liberal democratic regime secure in each of the countries in the Community. Then there has been a return to democracy in Latin America, although it still totters between the ghosts of populist demagoguery and militarism, its two endemic afflictions, and the iron shackles of debt are around its neck. Finally, there have been changes in the Soviet Union, in other totalitarian regimes. Whatever the scope of those reforms, they clearly signify the end of the myth of authoritarian socialism.

These changes are self-critical, tantamount to a confession. That is why I have spoken of the end of an era: we are witnessing the twilight of the idea of revolution in its last, unfortunate incarnation, the Bolshevik version. It is an idea that survives only in some regions on the periphery, and among crazed sects like the Peruvian terrorists. We do not know what the future holds for us: virulent nationalisms, ecological catastrophes, the rebirth of buried mythologies, new fanaticisms, but also discoveries and creations—history and its entourage of horrors and marvels. And we do not know if the peoples of the Soviet Union will experience new forms of oppression or an original, Slavic version of democracy. In any case, the revolutionary myth is dying. Will it revive? I don't think so. A Holy Alliance is not killing it: it is dying a natural death.

Joyce said that history is a nightmare. He was mistaken; nightmares vanish with the light of day, while history will not be over until our species ends. We are human through history and in it; if it ceased to exist, we would cease to be human. But the end of the revolutionary myth will perhaps permit us to think again about the principles that have founded our society, about their deficiencies and lacunae. Relieved at last of the struggle against totalitarian superstition, we can now reflect more freely on our tradition. And so the theme of the virtue of citizens makes its reappearance.

It is a theme that comes from classical antiquity; it concerned Machiavelli as well as Montesquieu, and today it has a painful actuality in many countries, in-

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cluding the Anglo-American democracy founded by the Puritan ethic. Kant taught that morality cannot be based on history, since history flows unceasingly, and we do not know if any law or design rules its capricious passing. We also know that metahistorical constructs—religious or metaphysical, conservative or revolutionary—strangle liberty and eventually corrupt fraternity.

The thought of the era that is beginning—if, in fact, an era is beginning—will have to find a point of convergence between liberty and fraternity. We must rethink our tradition, renovate it, and search for the reconciliation of the two great political traditions of modernity, liberalism and socialism. I will go so far as to say, paraphrasing Ortega y Gasset, that this is "the theme of our time." In some contemporary work—for example, in the work of Cornelius Castoriadis—I detect the beginning of a response.

What can be the contribution of poetry in the reconstitution of a new political thought? Not new ideas, but something more precious and fragile: memory. In each generation, the poets rediscover the terrible antiquity, and the no less terrible youth, of passions. In the schools and the universities, where the so-called political sciences are taught, the reading of Aeschylus and Shakespeare should be obligatory. Poets nourished the thought of Hobbes and Locke, Marx and Tocqueville. Through the mouth of the poet there speaks—I emphasize *speaks*, not writes—the *other* voice, the voice of the tragic poet and the buffoon, the voice of solitary melancholy and of joy, of laughter and of sighs, the voice of the lovers' embrace and of Hamlet contemplating the skull, the voice of silence and of tumult, mad wisdom and wise madness, the intimate murmur in the bedroom and the surging crowd in the square. To hear that voice is to hear time itself, the time that passes and comes back still, transformed into a few crystalline syllables.

—*Translated by Edith Grossman*

Who Is Sylvia?

BY HELEN VENDLER

Bitter Fame: A Life of Sylvia Plath by Anne Stevenson

(Houghton Mifflin, 384 pp., $19.95)

It is really a pity that Anne Stevenson, a poet, put her name to this book. Many readers will recall that the American poet Sylvia Plath (1932-63), after an initially brilliant start as a student and poet, attempted suicide while an undergraduate at Smith, was rescued, hospitalized, and given electroshock treatments, recovered, went on a Fulbright to England, married the British poet Ted Hughes, bore two children, and published ever more compelling poetry. The marriage broke up after Plath discovered her husband's infidelity, and Plath committed suicide in her London flat.

The curious dissonances in Plath's life—her often desperate journals and poems bearing witness to states of intense anguish, her public manner and her letters home keeping up an impregnably cheerful and "successful" tone—have made readers wonder about the life that lay behind the writing. There have already been two full-length biographies, a wretched one by Edward Butscher and a responsible but cursory one by Linda Wagner-Martin. The attraction of a biography of a poet by a poet—who might enter into Plath's intellect, into her psyche, into her reading and writing, more deeply than the rest of us—made me look forward to Stevenson's book.

In the event, however, it seems not to be Stevenson's book. She has lent her name to it, but a very curious "Author's Note" suggests that she did not write it with full authority. Ted Hughes's sister, Olwyn Hughes, is the shadow author, at least of the last four chapters, which cover the bulk of Plath's married years, from 1959 to 1963. And the "Author's Note," strange enough in itself, is accompanied by a footnote that no self-respecting poet, it seems to me, could have allowed. I reprint the entire "Author's Note" and its bizarre footnote:

> In writing this biography, I have received a great deal of help from Olwyn Hughes, literary agent to the Estate of Sylvia Plath. Ms. Hughes's contributions to the text have made it almost a work of dual authorship. I am particularly grateful for the work

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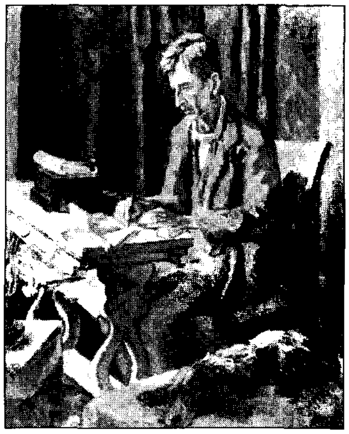

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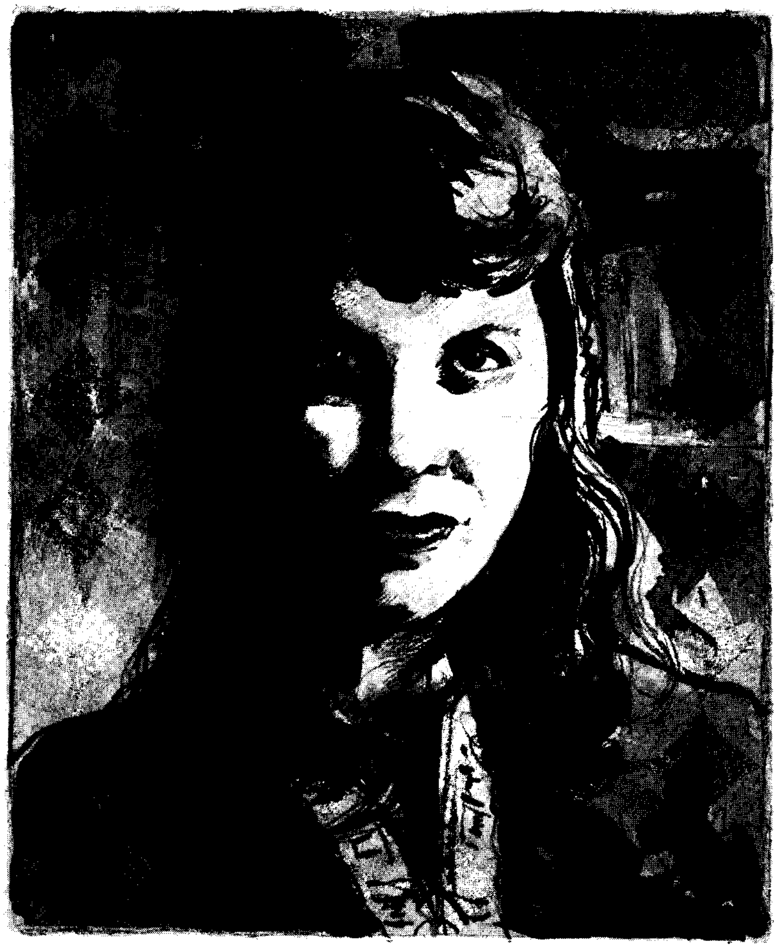
> she did on the last four chapters and on the Ariel poems of the autumn of 1962.*
>
> *Olwyn Hughes provided the following texts on poems in this book: the last paragraphs on "The Disquieting Muses" (concept only); "Blackberrying"; "Little Fugue"; "The Rabbit Catcher"; "Berck-Plage"; the introductory material to the Ariel poems in the first pages of Chapter 12; [and 9 other listed poems].

What poet-biographer would let her subject's ex-sister-in-law write her literary criticism for her?

The tale that must lie behind these notes can be deduced, perhaps, from the tale that Plath's earlier biographer, Linda Wagner-Martin (a professor of English at Michigan State University), tells in her own preface:

> As Olwyn read the late chapters of the book, however, and particularly after she read a draft of the manuscript in 1986, her cooperation diminished substantially. Olwyn wrote me at great length, usually in argument with my views about the life and development of Plath. Ted Hughes responded to a reading of the manuscript in draft form in 1986 with suggestions for changes that filled fifteen pages and would have meant a deletion of more than 15,000 words. . . .
>
> The requests for changes continued, and I concluded the permissions [to quote from Plath's work extensively] would be granted only if I agreed to change the manuscript to reflect the Hugheses' points of view. When I realized that this tactic would continue indefinitely, I had to end my attempt to gain permission to quote at length.



DRAWING BY JACK COUGHLIN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

This story suggests that behind, or with, Olwyn Hughes stands Ted Hughes.

The Stevenson biography, besides having a Hughes "co-authorship," also prints three peculiar appendices. They are reminiscences of Plath by Lucas Myers (an American who was a friend of Ted Hughes's at Cambridge University), Dido Merwin (the former wife of the poet W. S. Merwin), and the Anglo-Irish poet Richard Murphy. Since these accounts are thoroughly incorporated into the biography proper, the reprinting of them in full as appendices has the air of solicited testimonials. (Normally, a biographer interviews sources and reports what they said.) This biography, then, is an interested one, authorized by the Hughes family. Since Ted Hughes has testified that he destroyed at least one of Plath's journals composed during their marriage, and has said that another journal of that time has been "lost," there is no counter-testimony available from the poet's journals about the years recounted here in Olwyn Hughes's version.

In this light, the dust jacket blurb of *Bitter Fame* reads rather disingenuously:

> This is the first authoritative biography of the poet Sylvia Plath, as complete, balanced, and objectively written as the facts allow. . . . The circumstances of her death . . . helped to seed a perverse legend. Her family and friends have been helpless to dispel the posthumous miasma of fantasy, rumor, politics, and ghoulish gossip. . . . [B]enefiting from the unstinting help of Plath's sister-in-law Olwyn Hughes, Stevenson. . .

And there is more. A final in-group touch is bestowed on the title page, below the colophon, where we read that *Bitter Fame* is "A Peter Davison Book." Peter Davison, a poet who is an editor at Houghton Mifflin, had a brief affair with Plath in 1955. In his autobiography *Half-Remembered*, which appeared in 1973, he recounted, in an ungentlemanly revelation (ungentlemanly because Plath was dead and could not give her version), how, after Plath arrived for her first dinner at his apartment, "She asked more and more questions, she seemed strangely elevated, and she hardly waited to be asked to slip into my new bed." Plath saw Davison in London in 1960. She wrote an account of the meeting to her mother ("Peter is worse than ever," etc.), and Davison, in a letter in 1987 to Stevenson, which she quotes at length, gives his version of Plath's report ("pointed malice"). Finally, Davison's recent volume *The Great Ledge* contains a poem unmistakably about Plath, which begins:

Your poet has lain immortal
  for twenty-five years
hissing in fury, radiating
  rage,
while you—doomed to outlive her, loathing her alive
as deeply as she did her
  demented self—
try her case now at the bar,
  finding her guilty.

The publisher's claim that this biography is "as complete, balanced, and objectively written as the facts allow" can hardly stand up, then, given the presence of Ted Hughes, Olwyn Hughes, Stevenson, and Davison as presiders over it.

On the other hand, one sees the predicament of the Hughes family. They have a tale to tell—of the irruption into their life of a seriously disturbed American poet whose descent into emotional illness they were the closest witnesses of and the helpless attendants on. Plath was not subject to psychotic breaks like those experienced by Lowell. As her journals clearly show, she seems to have existed, rather, in successive mood swings of manic excitement and depressive paranoia. Plath said so herself:

> It is as if my life were magically run by two electric currents: joyous positive and despairing negative—which ever is running at the moment dominates my life, floods it. I am now flooded with despair, almost hysteria, as if I were smothering. As if a great muscular owl were sitting on my chest.

The extant journals give such ample proof of the pattern, in fact, that in reading the manic passages one begins to dread the crash that is sure to come.

Plath's writing always has something strained and false about it in the manic phase. Here is a fair sample from a letter to her mother in 1956:

> The reason why you must be at ease and not worry about my proud growing this time is because I have learned to make a life growing through toleration of conflict, sorrow, and hurt. I fear none of these things and turn myself to whatever trial with an utter faith that life is good and a song of joy on my lips. . . . I love others, the girls in the house, the boys on the newspaper, and I am flocked about by people who bask in my sun. I give and give; my whole life will be a saying of poems and a loving of people and giving of my best fiber to them.

And here is a fair sample of the depressed and paranoid Plath, taken from a journal written in 1958, while she was teaching at Smith:

> I am justifiably outraged. Spite. Meanness. What else. How I am exorcising them from my system. Like bile . . . Saturday exhausted, nerves frayed. Sleepless. Threw you, book, down, punched with fist. Kicked, punched. Violence seethed. Joy to murder someone, pure scapegoat.

Extreme actions were generated by such extreme mental states. I am quite willing to believe Stevenson's long recital of how badly Plath behaved—measured by the standard of conventional behavior—on any number of occasions. I am entirely willing to suppose that Plath turned furiously on people, made savage demands, was well known for her icy silences, possessive jealousy, hostile destructiveness, manipulative lying, and so on.

The trouble is that we really have no language for actions generated by mental disturbance. About Plath in and out of the poems (she does not always distinguish the two) Stevenson uses a language of blame appropriate to the acts of a sane and morally responsible person. "Sylvia" (Plath is always referred to in the biography as "Sylvia," as if one should still call Dickinson "Emily") "alternately fumed and sulked"; she was "fiercely antagonistic," exhibiting "triumphant spite," was "vengeful," "merciless," "self-justifying and unforgiving," "vituperative," "acidly vindictive," "ferocious," "hurtful," "brutal," "unjust," and so on. She had a "queer subversive spite" and a "gift for malice," exhibited "irrational and uncontrollable rage," and in her poems "witchily scatters her curses."

With a biographical subject of this sort (if for the moment we take Stevenson's account as indisputable), it might be more accurate to speak of possession by demons, and give up on the ethical vo-

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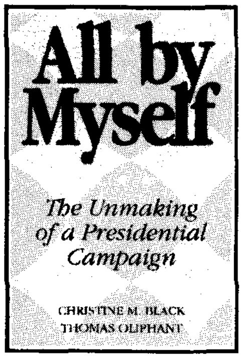

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cabulary of malice, spite, unforgivingness, vindictiveness, brutality, injustice, and ferocity. What is certain is that this biography repeatedly judges and condemns its subject as though she were entirely morally responsible, while paying lip service—by the occasional use of terms like "paranoia"—to an explanatory model that would invoke mental illness as the cause of Plath's behavior. Only the comment of Plath's last doctor, in a letter to Wagner-Martin quoted by Stevenson, takes the correct tone in the face of such a life. Dr. Horder writes:

> I believe, indeed it was repeatedly obvious to me, that she was deeply depressed, "ill," "out of her mind," and that any explanations of a psychological sort are inadequate [to explain her suicide].
>
> I believe . . . she was liable to large swings of mood, but so excessive that a doctor inevitably thinks in term of brain chemistry. This does not reduce the concurrent importance of marriage break-up or of exhaustion after a period of unusual artistic activity or from recent infectious illness or from the difficulties of being a responsible, practical mother. The full explanation has to take all these factors into account and more. But the irrational compulsion to end it makes me think that the body was governing the mind.

Naturally, a set of people surrounding a mentally disturbed person cannot take a detached and kindly tone toward someone agitating their day-by-day existence in intolerable ways. But whether a biographer should take on the tone of one of the aggrieved is another matter. Stevenson's tone is condemnatory, and her appended memoirs by others (as several reviewers have observed) are entirely one-sided. Stevenson gives no credence at all to Plath's complaints about Ted Hughes (voiced in passages suppressed by Plath's mother from *Letters Home* but paraphrased by Wagner-Martin). Still, she puts the worst possible construction on any action of Plath's. When Plath thought her mother might retire to England, and took her to see a house, "Clearly Sylvia, with her long-term future as a writer in mind, was angling for a baby sitter as well as for a supportive mother (and typist) who would live close at hand."

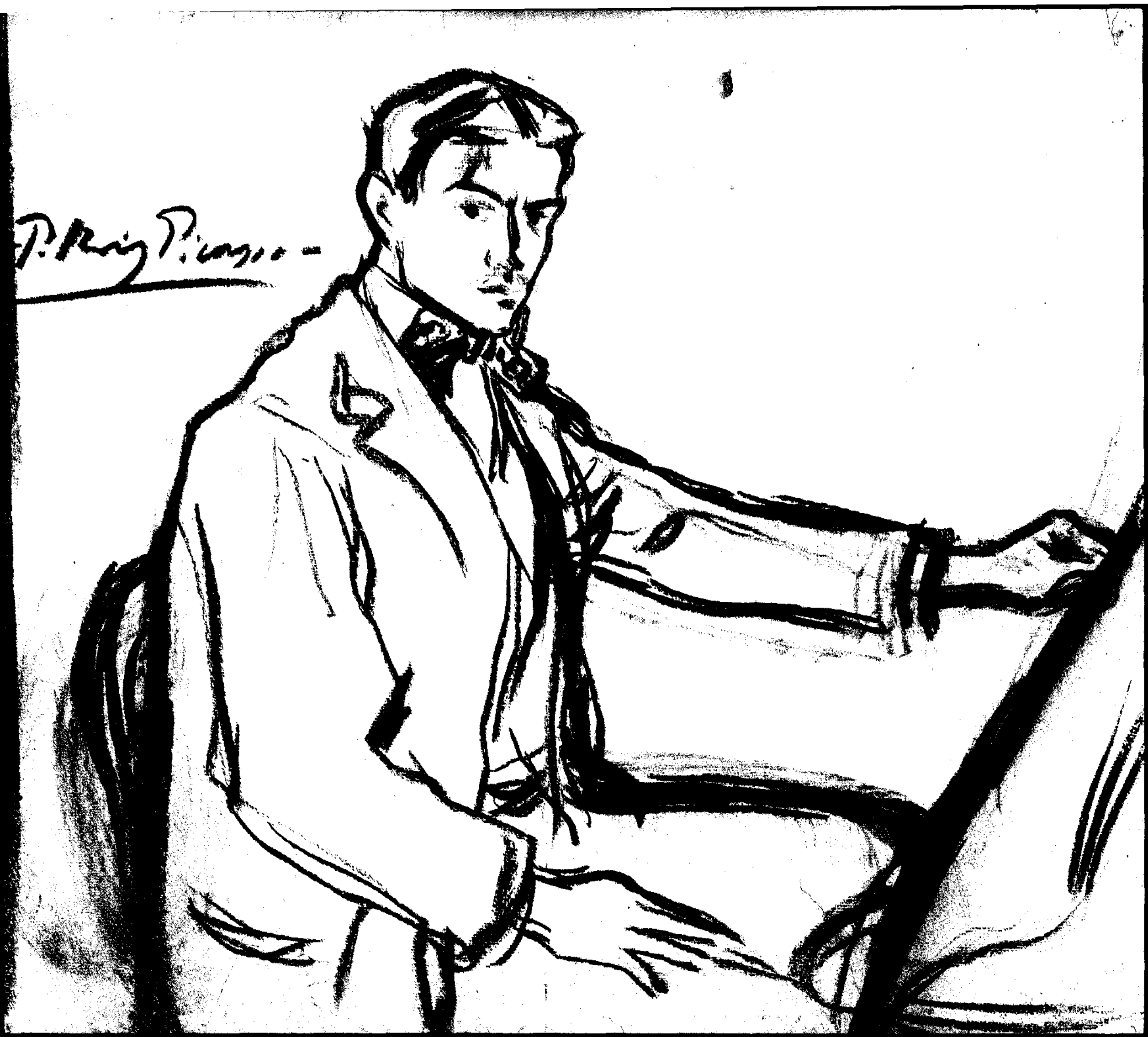
Others have remarked on the saintly portrait given in this volume of the kind, fatherly, helpful, forbearing Ted Hughes. His adultery is tucked away in an aside, and it is blamed, as we might expect, on Plath. Assia Wevill, whose fourth husband Hughes became when he left Plath, herself later committed suicide by gas, their child dying with her. But before that happened, she "gave Olwyn Hughes much the same account she had given Suzette of the weekend [when Plath suspected an attraction between her husband and Assia] and remarked that she doubted whether the attraction between Ted and herself would ever have developed into an affair, as it later did, had Sylvia behaved differently." The truth—given Hughes's denials of the accuracy of *Letters Home* and his destruction and loss of Plath's journals—is literally impossible for the rest of us to judge.

Nobody can doubt the awful stress that Plath's illness imposed on the marriage, and nobody, I think, can blame Hughes for giving up hope that Plath would change. But the destruction of the journal suggests that there were passions roused in Hughes that are not described here. Stevenson ascribes to Plath all the "murderous" emotions she finds in the poems, but she never looks to Hughes's poems (which often exhibit comparable rage) as clues to his personality. Those witnesses, all friendly to Hughes, who were invited to testify here in the appendices resent, understandably perhaps, the version of Plath's life that represents her as an abandoned and frightened young mother and demonizes Hughes as the unfaithful deserter of his brilliant young wife. Dido Merwin has no compunction about declaring her motives in testifying:

> There aren't, of course, all that many people in possession of the facts; and among those of us who are, there must be one or two who can't afford to fall foul of feminist apartheid or risk a boycott by the Lib Lobby. Moreover, nobody I know was prepared to say a word as long as Sylvia's children were growing up, with the result that her hagiographers got a head start of two decades plus in which to shape their apotheosis, which snowballed onward and upward virtually unchallenged.

This biography has been designed, if Merwin is to be believed about her part in it, to restore a balance of blame, to show Plath's current literary sympathizers that none of them could have stood a week in the same house as their heroine. This may well be true. But it is ultimately futile for the Hugheses to try to control Plath's story. Her own version, in the poems, has a literary authority, like Shakespeare's version of Richard III, that will assert itself whatever its biographical accuracy.

What is most disappointing to me in Stevenson's biography is not its author's inability to find a non-judgmental language for actions issuing from illness—a terribly difficult problem—but rather her inability to find any convincing language for Plath's poetic accomplishment. Praises are, of course, scattered around. A poem is "supreme" or has



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"extraordinary power" or "superb artistry"; it is "marvelously impressive" or has "beautiful lines." But the remarks on the poems that ought to bear out these judgments simply don't exist. Instead, Stevenson gives us summaries of psychological content ("hurt has hardened to hate") or thematic drift ("The Sylvia figure now takes central place in her poetic world, flanked by Otto [Plath's father] and the Mother/Other").

These tactics—psychological and thematic summary—tell us absolutely nothing about why the poems might deserve praise. Hurt/hate and parents are a dime a dozen in legions of bad poems. Nor do Stevenson's remarks on the tonality of the poems reassure a reader of her powers as a critic: " 'Cut' is a playful poem . . . and commemorates a real event: by accident Sylvia had all but cut off the fleshy tip of her thumb with a kitchen knife." A reader who characterizes "Cut" as "playful" has stopped reading before getting to the middle of the poem, where self-loathing and horror take over:

O my
Homunculus, I am ill.
I have taken a pill to kill

The thin
Papery feeling.
Saboteur
Kamikaze man—

The stain on your
Gauze Ku Klux Klan
Babushka
Darkens and tarnishes and when

The balled
Pulp of your heart
Confronts its small
Mill of silence

How you jump—
Trepanned veteran,
Dirty girl,
Thumb stump.

Stevenson tends to recoil from Plath's feelings of outrage, disgust, pain, and loss. Speaking of three late poems ("Fever 103°," "Purdah," and "Lady Lazarus"), she concludes, "These poems penetrating the furthest reaches of disdain and rage, are bereft of all normal 'human' feeling." What must Stevenson think of those moments when (in Yeats's words) "Hamlet rambles and Lear rages"? "Normal 'human' feeling" causes, after all, most domestic murders, many suicides, and many crimes, unless the word "normal" is to be axiomatically defined as "dull." Against Stevenson, let me quote Octavio Paz on the pressures put on poetry by the modern narrowing of "truth" to that which can be scientifically or logically proved:

> With the banishing of Don Quixote, a paradigm of language as unreality, what we call imagination, poetry, the sacred word, or the voice from another world, was cast beyond the pale. These names have a reverse side: incoherence, alienation, insanity. Poetry was sentenced to exile; madness, to the asylum. As the boundaries between the two became more and more tenuous, poets too were sometimes shut away and sometimes treated as harmless lunatics.
>
> The story of the modern age . . . might also be given a title reminiscent of the romances of chivalry: *The heroic feats of subjectivity, or the conquest of the world through the denial of the world.* . . . Each negation of subjectivity meant the suppression of a reality deemed to be irrational, and consequently condemned to unreality. . . . In this way twilight zones were created, inhabited by semirealities: poetry, woman, the homosexual, the proletariat, colonial peoples, the colored races. All these purgatories and infernos seethed in secret underground. A day came in the 20th century when this subterranean world exploded. The explosion is still going on, and its glare lights the agony of the modern age.

Plath was a part of that explosion and that agony.

Though Stevenson wants to claim that some of Plath's late poems are "bereft of all normal 'human' feeling," I can't conceive of any readers of poetry who have not themselves felt extreme hatred, extreme rage, extreme terror, or extreme exhilaration—feelings expressed by Plath in those late poems. We may not feel these emotions as often as Plath does, nor connect them with each other so symbolically as she does, but surely these are "normal" feelings. If hate and possessiveness and jealousy and revenge and terror are to be stigmatized as not "normal 'human' feelings," the range of emotional life is circumscribed to a propriety inimical to both life and literature. We recognize mental illness in a person not because the feelings are unfamiliar, but because they surge up inappropriately. Plath's gift in her poetry was to remove the feelings from the confines of a biographical context and give them pure incandescence, uncontextualized. They are like Platonic absolutes of feeling. In life, where they were acted out on people who may not have deserved them, they should have been diagnosed, of course, as symptoms of illness.

Because Stevenson cannot really like what she regards as Plath's deviations from propriety of family and marital feeling, her remarks on the wildly passionate (and faultlessly executed) late poems tend to be tame and bland. One might expect, after the comment "In the canon of Sylvia's work, 'Ariel' is supreme," something more revelatory than "In it she rehearses the whole spectrum of her color imagery." This is reminiscent of the worst sort of textbook question on a poem. ("Trace the water imagery through 'Lycidas.' ") After a paraphrase of "Ariel," a poem about riding a horse by that name straight into the sun, Stevenson adds one other remark of presumably analytic intent: "As always—and this is one of the sources of Plath's extraordinary power—every image is grounded in some *thing*, depicted as if with verbal paint." She has just told us that "Ariel happened to be the name of the (rather elderly, ponderous) horse on which Sylvia was learning to ride." It seems to me absurd to say that because there was a real horse, to which "verbal paint" has been applied, Plath's poetry possesses "extraordinary power." The grounding of poetic image in "some [real] *thing*" is by itself neither good nor bad for poetry: it is an extrapoetic consideration.

The poetic power of "Ariel" could be captured in 20 printed lines—the space Stevenson allots herself—but one would not begin with color imagery and real "things." One might begin with Plath's increasingly accelerating verbs of speed and motion (split, pass, catch, cast, haul, flake, unpeel, foam, melt, fly) or with the way her image of herself as "God's lioness" becomes "Godiva" ("God-I"), or with the momentum of the "I" rising to a scream (eye, thighs, white, I, I, child, cry, I, flies, suicidal, drive, eye), or, more broadly, with Plath's transformation in the poem of the old theological image of the soul as a dewdrop returning to God:

> And I
> Am the arrow,
>
> The dew that flies
> Suicidal, at one with the drive
> Into the red
>
> Eye, the cauldron of morning.

The transformation of the hurtling "I"—flying suicidal with a drive toward the Eye—into the wholly new and unprecedented sound cluster represented by "the cauldron of morning" makes us believe that the dew has indeed lost its "I" and has been absorbed into the sun.

Plath's poetry is not an act of socially disruptive madness. It is an act of sanity in solitude. (It may be that Plath could have truly sane moments only in solitude, that the strain of social life pushed her to her extremes of pretense and hysteria.) If I seem to insist on Stevenson's lack of emotional sympathy for the poetry, and on the consequent pointlessness of her occasional critical remarks, it is because the biography of a poet ought to center around what makes the poet interesting. Plath had three signal gifts as a poet: an emotional capacity for great intensity of feeling; an analytic capacity by which she found the component parts of what must have begun as inchoate states of passion; and a frightening gift for the accurate transcription, often by analogy, of those states. The last seems to have been almost involuntary, though she worked to perfect it.

Stevenson is primly censorious about the accuracy, which she regards as bad manners. She quotes Plath's journal entry recording her first acceptance from the *New Yorker*. The letter of acceptance came to the apartment where the Hugheses were living in Northampton. Plath writes:

> I tore it open right there on the steps, over mammoth marshmallow Mrs. Whalen sitting in the green yard with her two pale artificially cute little boys in their swimsuits jumping in and out of the rubber circular portable swimming pool and bouncing a gaudy striped ball. The black thick print of Howard Moss's letter banged into my brain.

Stevenson comments, "The entry is characteristic. Transported with joy over her success, Sylvia could not resist a gratuitous dig at Mrs. Whalen and her 'artificially cute little boys.' " I would say, on the contrary: only a gifted writer would have paused, in the midst of recording her success, to find the mot juste—and what a mot juste—for the repellent children.

Of course, the drive toward the mot juste, the impulse to characterize with a phrase, is not experienced by nonwriters, who see such remarks as cruel. Stevenson records Olwyn Hughes's recollection of "a 'malicious' account of Sylvia's on the behavior of someone Sylvia knew but Olwyn didn't. Olwyn said, 'I say, you're awfully critical, aren't you?'. . . Sylvia glared accusingly with a half-terrified, half-furious look." Stevenson forgets that every person with verbal flair is repeatedly socially reproved, as a child and as an adult, for being "critical"—that is, for speaking accurately about life and acquaintances. Soon such people feel they cannot say a single true thing in public. Plath's pitiful list of "Don'ts" to herself in Cambridge shows how horribly she felt she had to rein in every naturalness of expression:

> *Don't drink much. . .*
> *Be chaste and don't throw self at people. . . .*
> *Be friendly and more subdued. . . .*
> *Keep troubles to self.*
> *Don't criticize anybody* to anyone else.

A true biographer of Plath should grant the fearful accuracy of Plath's observations of human life and behavior, and the inspired imagination governing

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her transcription of emotional states. Plath learned from Lawrence—but Lawrence's poetry lacks the tense electricity of Plath's necessitarian structures. And she learned from Ted Hughes—but while Hughes faces down into nature, Plath flies from it to the Absolute. A suitable biographer of Plath would have complete contempt for social and familial propriety and "normal 'human' feeling" as adequate measuring rods for imaginative expression.

Almost the last word in this book is given to Olwyn Hughes. In the epilogue, she is quoted as saying, "[Plath's] work is hermetic, even, on ethical grounds, questionable. But as art it is unassailable." The notion of "unassailable" art that is nonetheless "on ethical grounds, questionable" is a familiar canard, usually voiced by institutions that ban books. The ethical struggle that results in accurate art is a profound and heroic one. It consists of refusing the false, the strained, the untransformed, the sentimental, the bombastic, the self-serving, the deceitful, the institutionally approved. It refuses these not only thematically and stylistically, but structurally and rhythmically. (There are such things as sentimental and bombastic and self-serving rhythms.)

Not one of us writing prose has any idea of what is asked of the spirit by such impeccable honesty on so many levels. A good biography of Plath would trace her struggle toward the alchemy of the word into poetry—showing how she forsook the duly intellectual, the winsomely cute, the fey-fantastic, and the complaining egotistical (all strategies on her journey) for the passionately imaginative, the stringently accurate, the ruthlessly analytic, the musically ravishing. Maybe when all the interested parties are dead, a better biography of this splendid and suffering poet, true to her marred life and to her perfected art, may be permitted to appear.

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Of Mice and Mendelssohn

BY RICHARD TARUSKIN

Stormy Applause: Making Music in a Worker's State by Rostislav Dubinsky

(Hill and Wang, 291 pp., $22.95)

The Moscow Conservatory, so the story goes, was infested with mice. After all known means of extermination had failed, the rector, People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. Alexander Sveshnikov, put an ad in the newspaper promising 1,000 rubles to anyone who would rid the building of its pest. A little man appeared, guaranteeing success but demanding half of the reward in advance. After some initial resistance, the desperate rector handed over 500 rubles, whereupon the man took a little windup mouse out of his pocket and sent it scurrying through the halls and stairways of the Conservatory. Minutes later it went whizzing out the door, followed by every mouse on the premises. Amazed, Sveshnikov offered his congratulations and tendered the remainder of the advertised reward. Then, brandishing another 1,000 rubles, he asked his deliverer whether his other pocket might not perchance contain a little windup Jew.

I heard this story, which so perfectly sums up the status of Soviet Jews in music, resented but indispensable, one evening in the Moscow Conservatory dorm where I lived for a year as an exchange student in the early 1970s. My roommate Seryozha shared it with me—mouse to mouse, you might say—when he found out that I belonged, as he did, to the unloved "nationality." On the question of Soviet nationalities I had by then been educated. When I showed people I met that year a snapshot of my girlfriend, they frequently asked, "Is she Jewish or American?"

(As for Comrade Sveshnikov, he was a choral conductor whose skill at producing thunderous paeans to the Leader and Teacher had led to his installation as rector of the Conservatory during the black year of 1948. The old hack, aged 81, was still at the helm during my year of residence there. Having heard that an American was studying at his institution, he summoned me to his sanctum for a photo op. As soon as he saw me, however, his practiced eye spotted a mouse. The audience lasted all of two awkward minutes, and the photographer never snapped the picture.)

I knew Seryozha for a brother mouse the moment I heard his surname; though seemingly Azerbaijani in form, it obviously derived from a Jewish holiday. Like most Soviet Jews, Seryozha kept the faith of his forefathers a secret when possible—as I, to my great astonishment, was also cautioned to do by my Russian language tutor, one of the most candid and sophisticated people I met in the Soviet Union. Luckily Seryozha's internal passport helped him conceal his Jewishness. He came from Makhachkala, capital of the Daghestan Autonomous Republic on the banks of the Caspian Sea, where the tiny Jewish population descended from the earliest Hebrew settlement on territory now belonging to the Soviet Union. Unrelated to the Ashkenazim, the Jews of European Russia, these Jews had an Iranian dialect for an ancestral language, and were recognized by the Soviet power as a distinct national group despite the religion they practiced. Thus the all-important *piaty punkt* (Item Five) on Seryozha's passport read "Tat" rather than "Evrei," and he prized it.

Our fleeting intimacy apart, I could not count Seryozha among my friends. As soon as he moved into my room, some months into my stay in Moscow, I began spending most of my time out of it, since my Soviet acquaintances abruptly stopped visiting me for conversations over glasses of tea mixed with Tang. (The Tang, which I got at the American Embassy commissary, fascinated them, since they knew it was astronaut food.) One of them, Dima from Minsk, a violinist whose Jewishness was written all over his face, used to refer to Seryozha as "Vertukhayev," a corruption of his surname derived from student slang, which translates, roughly, as "flake." He also hinted that I take a look at my roommate's grades the next time they were posted, and ask myself how he maintained his good standing. But I already had plenty of indications that Seryozha was the stool pigeon assigned to me. I concluded that someone up there knew what a Tat was, and used Seryozha's ambiguous status as a screw. I never held my roommate's surveillance duties against him; indeed, it became a special adventure to conceal from him my many reportable activities (such as arranging for the non-quota immigration of several of my relatives to the United States).

The insecurity of my Jewish musician friends in Moscow was evident in countless ways, great and small. When it came time to say goodbye, for example, they

For Robert Phelps, Dead at 66

The *Times* reports six years in Elyria,
  browbeaten suburb of your childhood
before my own had begun in Shaker Heights,
  the brighter side of Cleveland's tracks . . .

years I never took into account, nonplussed
  by your habit of addressing me
—or any other man you regarded as
  worthy of the gaudy attention

to bookish leanings and upstanding looks
  you were gaily ready to bestow—
as "my dear boy," "my son," and "my child," although
  you were clearly the one to be raised

—or lowered—to the permanently askew
  level of our promiscuities;
it became entertainment, "telling Robert"
  last night's scurrilous episode

and watching your vicarious blush appear,
  followed by the squeal of gratified
incredulity which greeted each disgrace . . .
  Oneself is always an abstraction—

le concret, ce sont les autres. To which end
  you listened more intently, waiting
like some credulous minotaur in his cave
  for Theseus to arrive, whereupon

you became Ariadne, eager to oblige.
  What can we relish if we recoil
from vulgarity? Not your problem, was it?
  Masterpieces you called "strenuous,"

and were satisfied—or so you asserted—
  with patching up Colette, endless
apprenticeships to other men's disclosures,
  Jouhandeau, Wescott, Cocteau—not "works"

but the launching-pad that sends the rocket up;
  how gleefully you would disparage
or dismiss the monuments I so envied,
  standing emulously in their shade . . .

What *you* wanted—it amounted to addiction—
  was life recounted without design,
without that tyranny—just "the real thing strange":
  letters, diaries, secrets written down,

and not having to dilute or deprave them—
  better one small bold astronomer
than any number of big decorous stars!
  Even silence can be indiscreet,

and not everything we make up is a lie.
  About a thousand book reviews
made you too familiar to care much for Fame—
  what you liked was how others were moved,

strangers. Your own maneuvers you confined to
  the background—more room there than up front
where the young struggle and sweat for their applause
  —lovely, though, those intervals of flesh

under hot lights! Such was your *gran rifiuto*:
  I wonder if the delicacy
of your domesticities (that son unseen,
  that wife dedicated to her art)

made your love for men the mirror type
  of mine, you the critical voyeur
resisting "production," I proliferating
  among nameless bodies, finding soon

how many were dying who never used to . . .
  Granted: you would not write. Then your hand
began to shake so, you could not write. It was
  Parkinson's, as we would discover,

but was it not at first a failure of your will?
  Those years you passed off as "successes,"
triumphant manipulations of decor;
  I recall seasons when you devised

"literaries"—a noun, *voyons*—for our latest
  Mme Verdurin. Besides the fun,
she paid far better than mere authorship, since
  the rich, my dear, are always with us.

I sat at those tables with you, glib, grinning,
  ungainly, so greedy for limelight
on my terms and abashed by your forbearance,
  those evenings of unavailing skill.

Silence = Death, according to the slogan
  broadcast for AIDS. Yours was another
silence, as you said with an absurd chuckle;
  a man can't go on living all the time.

At least it was not the plague, not *our* plague, only
  Parkinson's, only cancer. You smiled,
invoking plausible pretexts—embarrassed
  (such was your humility) to die

among the victims, to benefit even
  erroneously from emotion
reserved for the unwarrantable dead.
  Forty years out of Cleveland, we live

and die in the same Village now, Robert dear,
  and Shaker Heights seems quite as good
a place to have gone from as your Elyria.
  It was the wrong family member

you summoned up: you are the man I should be
  if I had not been the child I was;
not son, not father either, but—I know it now—
  the lost brother found. *Vale frater.*

RICHARD HOWARD

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one and all lowered their eyes, and with voices strangled by embarrassment asked me not to write them from abroad. (It would nullify their chances of ever touring in the West.) Now and then a message would come from one of them, mailed from outside the country by a willing foreigner. Dena, who worked in the Conservatory's language lab, and who asked me to record a set of English exercises because she liked my American accent, once turned to me after a recording session and asked in the tiniest of voices whether there was a Jewish problem in the United States. I don't know where my tact was that day, because I answered that whatever there was, it was "nothing like here." She flushed scarlet and fairly shrieked, "I never said there was a problem here!" (Years later she called me from somewhere in Michigan. Dima called from Brooklyn. Among my other Moscow friends who surfaced in the States during the huge wave of emigration in the late 1970s was Boris Berman, a great pianist who now heads the piano department at the Yale School of Music; in Moscow he had functioned in public only as a modest harpsichordist, leading an early music group known as Madrigal.)

Thus I have a frame of reference into which I can place this book by Rostislav Dubinsky, the former leader of the Borodin Quartet, and I can report that no other émigré memoir I've read so vividly captures what it is like to be a precariously successful Jew in the Soviet Union. That—and not "the societal development in the Soviet Union in the years B.G. (before Gorbachev)," as Isaac Stern's egregious blurb would have it—is what this book is about. Its subject is living with racism, not with communism.

That is something on which Gorbachev so far has had no effect—or rather, no positive effect. For *glasnost*, to the extent that it means pluralism (in Russian it merely means "above-boardness"), should not be confused with liberalism. Everybody in the Soviet Union now speaks with a louder voice (*glas*), including the anti-Semites. Neo-Nazi organizations like the one called Pamyat can hold public rallies and openly call for the expulsion of the Jews, still the scapegoats of all who long for a regression to a utopian, tribally cohesive past that never was. As we all know from the daily papers, *perestroika* has been a spur to nationalism among the peoples of the U.S.S.R., and that—especially when accompanied by economic distress—has never been good for the Jews. So I would be surprised if Conservatory mice now feel very different from the way they felt when, at the height of what is now known as the "stagnation," I observed them in situ.

Like many musicians—well, yes, like many Jews—Dubinsky is a born raconteur, and his stories are well-polished gems, baroque arias (suitably embellished on repeats), anything but factual reportage. The very title of the book is a choice example of the author's virtuosity as an ironist. "Stormy applause" (*burniye aplodismenty*) is something musicians never hear in Soviet Russia: it is the parenthetical insert that inevitably followed the most odious platitudes in the stenograms of speeches by the leaders that used to fill the pages of Soviet newspapers. Some of Dubinsky's more elaborate set pieces, like the one about playing at Stalin's funeral, or the one about accompanying a traveling Soviet circus in East Germany, have already been much excerpted and paraphrased and have achieved a rightful fame.

But nobody who knows how to read expects documentary veracity from memoirs. Musically informed critics have been catching Dubinsky out on spurious details, much as I caught myself repeatedly in little involuntary lies as I tried to set down a few memoirs of my own up above. But Dubinsky disavows his own facts on his very first page, where he warns that "a few episodes" have been "slightly shifted in time" (especially in the account of the Quartet's "first trip to America," actually a conflation of them all); and though he vaunts his ability to recall "almost word-for-word conversations" (oh, please) at a distance of 40 years, "I still don't call this book a memoir."

But that is exactly what it is. No memoirist worth his salt scruples at the sacrifice of literal truth to something higher. (Russians call that something *khudozhestvennaia pravda*—literally, "artistic truth"—meaning truth to an idea.) For if there were not something higher to motivate memoirs, they would never get written. On this level, Dubinsky's narrative is synergy itself. Everything about it, including factors that (unless he is a writer on Solzhenitsyn's level) were probably not under his conscious control, conspires to create an unsettling portrait of a mind harried to the verge of paranoia. The essential truth of this remarkable book lies in its embittered tone, its self-justifying selectivity, its manifestly biased judgments and skewed perceptions, and, despite its frequent hilarity, its evocation of a depression and a disaffection that no amount of commercial or artistic success could assuage.

The Borodin Quartet, which continues to function in Dubinsky's absence

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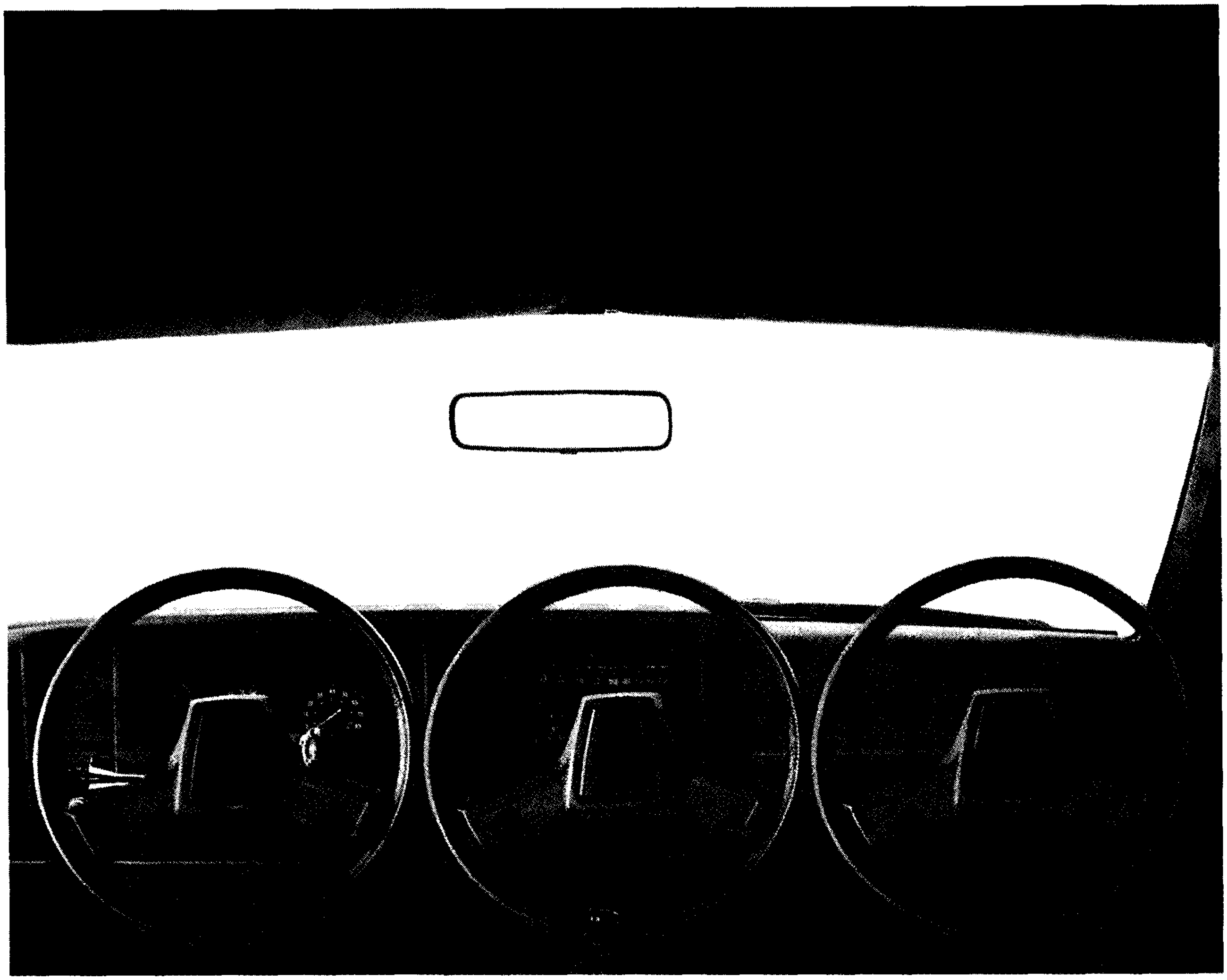

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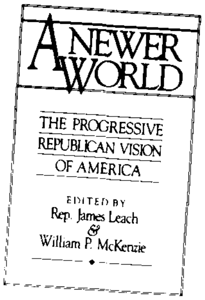

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with the remaining founding member (the cellist Valentin Berlinsky) as spiritus rector, has surely been the most successful of all Soviet chamber music ensembles. It is now approaching its 45th anniversary. The odds against such longevity are always great, but in the case of this group in that country they were colossal. "Soviet chamber music," to begin with, is almost as much of an oxymoron as, let us say, "Orthodox organ music." The medium, with a relatively short and undistinguished history in Russia, had to contend, as a "socially exclusive genre," with stiff ideological opposition after the revolution from exponents of "Proletkult."

Fortunately for practitioners of decaying bourgeois art forms, the arts policy of the Soviet state has never been dictated by revolutionary ideology, but by the bourgeois tastes of the leaders. And musical "cadres" are formed in the Soviet Union with at least one eye on the Western competition circuit, in which chamber music, though far behind instrumental virtuosity, does figure. Still, there have been times when the Soviet government has found it expedient to exploit class opposition to chamber music. One of those occasions was the notorious series of "hearings," amounting to artistic show trials, that were convened and manipulated in the late 1940s by Andrei Zhdanov, Stalin's cultural watchdog, as a means of re-establishing strict Party controls on creative expression after the wartime relaxation. The infamous Resolution on Music, promulgated by the Central Committee of the Communist Party on February 10, 1948, specifically rejected all styles and genres of music that appealed only to "narrow circles of specialists and musical epicures." This was no time to be launching a string quartet.

That was one strike. The other was the fact that at its inception the ensemble that became the Borodin Quartet was an almost purebred foursome of Conservatory mice. The great Sveshnikov makes an early appearance in Dubinsky's narrative, at a pre-competition audition the fledgling quartet failed to pass: "I not only can't listen to them," his voice boomed from the balcony of the darkened hall, "I can't stand the sight of them!"

The Black Years of Soviet music were, of course, also the Black Years of Soviet Jewry, from the murder of the actor Solomon Mikhoels in 1948 (the subject of Dubinsky's first chapter) to the "Doctors' Plot" right before the death of Stalin five years later. During this period, according to Dubinsky, "Mendelssohn's portrait disappeared from the walls of the Conservatory's Bolshoi Hall." (I've not been able to confirm this, but I have my doubts that the Soviets would have so glaringly aped the Nazis. In any case, it's back now. And Anton Rubinstein's portrait was never disturbed; his brother, after all, founded the institution.) With its original membership the quartet would never have survived the late Stalin phase, despite the fact that David Oistrakh—a wartime Communist whose world renown had made him an honorary "Russian" (just consult any Soviet music dictionary)—took them under his wing.

Fortunately for the *kollektiv* (and for Dubinsky's personal career), two of the mice quickly departed. Vladimir Rabei, the second violinist, was first to go, in 1952. He gave up his musical career in despair and became a literary translator. He was replaced, at the recommendation of a sympathetic Conservatory professor, by Yaroslav Alexandrov ("exactly what you need . . . a Russian and a Party member"). The violinist Rudolf Barshai left a year later out of ambition, having been offered a place in a racially less compromised ensemble that had been guaranteed trips abroad. (He went on to found the highly acclaimed Moscow Chamber Orchestra, and finally emigrated a few years before Dubinsky; for a time he conducted the Vancouver Symphony.) His replacement, Dmitry Shebalin, was the son of a prominent Soviet composer who had been Sveshnikov's predecessor as rector of the Conservatory.

This left Dubinsky at once the leader and the solitary official Jew in the quartet. (Berlinsky, a half Jew, was allowed to choose "Russian" as his Item Five.) While the group was now viable for foreign touring, and entitled to a Russian name (they officially became the Borodin Quartet in 1954), mixed ethnicity created psychological tensions. The author's unbalanced, almost unremittingly hostile and mocking descriptions of his colleagues show most vividly the toll that his status exacted on him. To him, they were a trio of potential double agents, ever ready to bait and to betray the one surviving mouse.

Dubinsky also displays a characteristic insensitivity to the tribulations of non-Jews, who have also been known to suffer at times in the Worker's State. Nowhere, for example, does he mention the new violinist's family heritage, or the fact, universally known in the Soviet Union, that the elder Shebalin had been hounded from his post at the head of the Conservatory and abused by name in the Resolution on Music. Dmitry Shebalin (who is still a member of the quartet) comes across in these memoirs as nothing more than "a simple fellow, with an open Russian face, [who] drank vodka nicely . . . ," whose peasant mug conveniently offset the leader's nose. No, there is something more to him in Dubinsky's account—a suspected informer.

Alexandrov's surname is also distinguished in the annals of Soviet music. Two important composers (one of them the founder of the Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble and author of the Soviet national anthem, the other a respected member of the most senior generation of Soviet musicians) were his namesakes. I have not been able to determine whether either of them was his relative, but Anatoly Alexandrov (1888-1982), the better of the two, did write especially for the Borodintsy. This is never mentioned. Indeed, the possibility of Soviet culture outside of Jewish culture is for the most part contemptuously dismissed: anti-Semitism in reverse. Except for the revered Shostakovich, all Soviet composers are alike to Dubinsky—"Stepan Akimovich or Akim Stepanovich," he calls them, as if in answer to the interchangeable Yankels and Mendels of Russian Jew-baiting jokes. His colleague Alexandrov is depicted as a power-hungry usurper and a toady to authority.

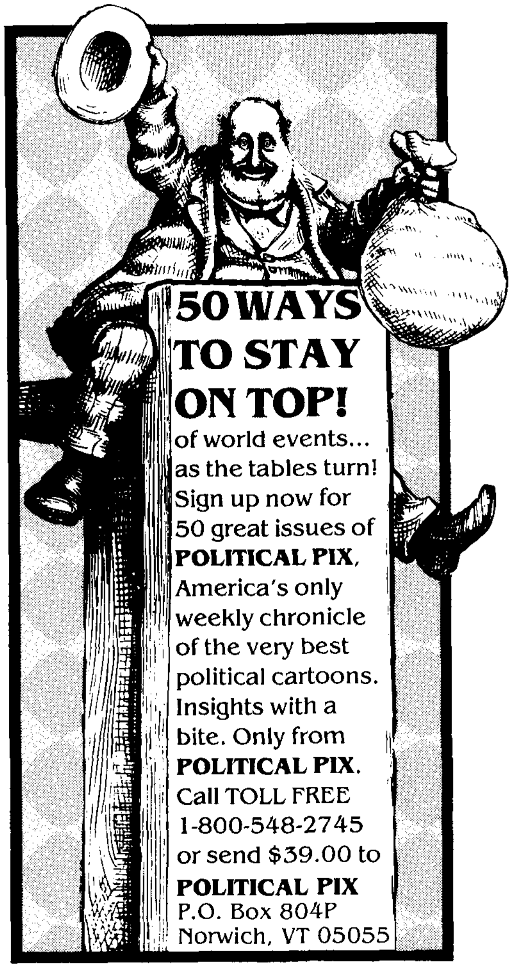
Similarly suspicious (and suspect) is Dubinsky's attitude toward the Beethoven Quartet, the great Soviet chamber ensemble of the older generation, whose members, though not Party members, were not Jews either. This undoubtedly gave them a leg up, but their treatment at Dubinsky's hands is marred by a nauseating imputation of guilt by association. "After the Second World War," Dubinsky writes, "when at a grand Kremlin reception Stalin drank his famous toast to the Russian nation, taken as a signal to start an anti-Semitic campaign, a large number of Russians, more chauvinists than music lovers, congregated around the Beethoven Quartet." Later he adds, insufferably, "If the Beethoven Quartet's audience was slightly anti-Semitic, then ours was slightly anti-Soviet." As evidence of "dissidence" à la Borodin, he emphasizes their way of performing Tchaikovsky ("we abandoned altogether the typical imperial cliché and tried to show most of all the tragic fate of the composer"—a bigger cliché) and, even more to the point, "our manner of emphasizing the dark side of Shostakovich's music, for which, according to Soviet standards, we should have been brought to trial for anti-Soviet propaganda."

The endlessly debated status of Shostakovich's art vis-à-vis the Soviet establishment is indeed what engages the most profound truth-level of Dubinsky's testimony. Three chapters in this book pertain to the great composer. In one the Borodintsy play his Fourth Quartet (with its "Jewish finale") at a private post-concert gathering in Moldavia that included the composer, as a way of atoning for the intrusion of a Jew-baiting local punk. In another they are summoned to play him his autobiographical Eighth Quartet and leave in silence when the composer is moved beyond utterance. In what is by far the most affecting and significant scene in the book, they play the Third ("Shostakovich's best quartet, . . . a disturbing musical tale about the destruction of Russian culture") to a sick, exhausted David Oistrakh, confined to his bed in a London hotel room. These chapters are among the permanently valid and valuable writings on music under the Soviets, and an eternal rebuke to musical formalists everywhere. Do not fail to read them.

Still, a corrective is needed. For it was the gratuitously maligned Beethoven Quartet, not the Borodin, that enjoyed a prolonged creative partnership with the great Soviet composer. They gave the premiere performances of all of Shostakovich's 15 quartets (except the first and the last, completed after the death of Sergei Shirinsky, the original Beethoven cellist). The Third and Fifth quartets are dedicated to the Beethovens, and the 11th through the 14th are dedicated to its four original members individually, in one case in memoriam.

This extraordinary fidelity on the part of a composer who made conspicuous and dangerous common cause with Jewish culture absolutely precludes the characterization of the "Beethovens" that Dubinsky enviously thrusts upon them. Dmitry Tsyganov (the quartet's leader) and Shirinsky were beloved figures for their performance and for their pedagogical activities; the students at the Conservatory venerated them as secular saints. The alert reader of *Stormy Applause* will discover, moreover, that the Beethoven's second violinist, Vasili Shirinsky (the cellist's brother), though Dubinsky spits on him with a special vengeance, was probably the Borodin Quartet's greatest single benefactor.

Finally, Berlinsky: the author's true musical life companion—his *sputnik*, to use a familiar but misunderstood word—and the unfairest portrait of them all. I was already aware of their notorious love-hate relationship, for I came to know the cellist rather well during my Moscow days. (He was the teacher of one of my close Soviet friends.) The Berlinsky I knew was a very shrewd and worldly man, by far the "hippest" musician of an older generation I was privi-



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leged to meet in Russia. He was very much the resigned and resourceful semi-cynic when it came to the realities of Soviet musical life. I heard from him several of the stories I re-encountered between the covers of Dubinsky's book. I can thus testify to their essential truth, and also to the distortions wrought by the émigré's bitterness.

One story concerned Sviatoslav Richter, not at all a worldly man, and his comically pathetic offer to let the embattled Rostropovich off the hook in the difficult days before Solzhenitsyn's deportation (soon to be followed by Rostropovich's own forced expatriation) by taking the writer, whom Rostropovich had been sheltering, into his own household. That Rostropovich saw fit to share this story with Berlinsky, a Party member, was an acknowledgment of the latter's humanity and trustworthiness, as one realizes when one has lived among Soviet musicians. I will always treasure the memory of my cellist friend's birthday party, when Berlinsky, his teacher, repeated this very story, as it were, in the bosom of his musical family and my presence did not inhibit him. At that moment I felt a degree of acceptance unmatched at any other point in my Soviet stay, and a personal warmth of a kind hard to experience in the West, where sharing even lighthearted confidences is not a matter of deadly seriousness.

Emigrés often lose that nourishing feeling of connectedness with people that comes from mutual reliance and support in the face of risk. To judge by the tone of these memoirs, Dubinsky may be regretting the loss, and envying Berlinsky's ability to make a dignified personal peace with tyranny. That would account for the way he has chosen to caricature his old friend: as a mindless and humorless follower of the Party line (when he isn't binging on booze or flesh). So successful is the characterization that passages pertaining to the cellist have been repeatedly singled out by reviewers for bemused quotation.

It pains me to read these passages, but I understand them. Throughout the book, Berlinsky is seen as a stolid squelcher—of artistic initiative, of spontaneous human response, of straight answers to hard questions. If this had been Berlinsky's book, Dubinsky would have emerged from the same anecdotes as an immature self-indulger, an incorrigible bigmouth, a heedless taker of silly vainglorious risks. That is undoubtedly how these two gifted and seasoned musicians came to see each other over the years. The fact that they managed somehow to make common cause is the reason why the Borodin Quartet at once survived at home and flourished abroad. The period of international acclaim is over for both of them now, and I would wager that Berlinsky, the hidden Jew who did not emigrate, is the happier man. Happier than Rostislav Dubinsky can stand.

RICHARD TARUSKIN teaches music at the University of California, Berkeley, and is at work on a study of Russian opera.

Queen of Paris

BY MAVIS GALLANT

Jazz Cleopatra: Josephine Baker in Her Time by Phyllis Rose

(Doubleday, 321 pp., $22.50)

In 1968, a few days after a triumphant popular rally in support of President Charles de Gaulle rang down the curtain on the events of May, a much smaller Gaullist demo, flag-bearing and by now politically pointless, straggled over the Pont de l'Alma and along the leafy avenues of the Seventh Arrondissement—placid and right-thinking territory. The marchers did not seem to be particularly jubilant; they gave an impression of having been brought together in a tearing hurry and told, "Stick together, keep moving, and stay out of the Latin Quarter."

The difference between this and any other residual muster-round-the-winner parade was in the number of foreign flags, American and Canadian, on display. If the march had any tactical purpose, it must have been to make clear that North American democracy was solidly behind the recent turning point. (Large American flags are not easy to come by in France. As for the Canadian flag, its design had been adopted barely three years before, and only a handful of people in the whole of Western Europe were likely to know what it stood for.) In another context, only a week or two before, this would have been criticized as outrageous meddling in French affairs; now, on this drizzly afternoon, with the thin line of police on hand looking bored and exhausted, and the few bystanders looking slightly curious and largely indifferent, the whole proceeding seemed a strategic afterthought, the work of some enthusiastic amateur.

There was at least one American on parade. Leading the march, carrying her flag, singing "La Marseillaise," strode Josephine Baker. She was 62. Her face was the tight, theatrical mask of those years, strongly made up, the eyes slits under puffed lids, her hair pulled straight back. This time she was not wearing the well-cut Free French Air Force women's auxiliary uniform she still put on for serious occasions, reminding one of those postwar pictures of her, sitting on the hood of an army jeep, showing her splendid legs. Her uniform now was the tightly-belted raincoat, fashionable in the mid-1950s, leopard-patterned, bringing to mind Josephine Baker in a much earlier incarnation: the international vedette, adulated and young, taking her pet jaguar (or ocelot) for a run on the boardwalk at Deauville.

Was it Baker, all loyalty and goodwill, still devoted to an older France, who had organized this somewhat pitiful turnout, or had "they"—there were many "they"s in her long career—once again tried to use her? A man standing on the curb on Avenue Bosquet said, not unkindly, "*Qu'est-ce qu'elle veut encore, celle-là?*" If the French, in 1968, were sick and tired of hearing about Baker's unpaid income taxes and other personal problems, seen to be among the worries of the rich, there was and always would be a current of affection for *Joséphine*. Still, she had forfeited a kind of esteem among liberals, intellectuals, the left, and the young by marching up the Champs Elysées a day or so before, together with André Malraux and thousands of other Gaullists, many of them chanting, "*La police avec nous.*" It had put her on the same side as the tribe young people called "the dinosaurs."

The young were born too late to know that Baker's fighting life had to do with racial equality, that she had stuck with France when France was down, that she had been a Gaullist when it was a handicap, not a luxury—that, therefore, she would never be able to see, or even imagine, why they might want a change. Some of the people around her on the Champs Elysées must have shouted, "*La France*

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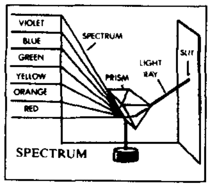

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aux Français," the epitome of racist feeling. Did she so much as hear it? She had the Croix de Guerre, the Medaille de la Résistance, and the Légion d'Honneur; her rank of lieutenant in the Free French Air Force was by no means bogus, but a recognition of wartime service. She considered herself French, as she considered herself Jewish by dint of having had, briefly, a Jewish husband. Her devotion to France outlasted her attachment to any of the men she married, or may have loved, but somehow had never allowed it to take root in her life.

One of the striking things about Josephine Baker in her 60s was how French she seemed. The sprite from St. Louis who at 19 had appeared to the French—and to much of Europe—like a mixture of African art brought to life and the most daring of women and wildest of nude dancers, was now set in a mold familiar to Parisians. Even her thin singing voice, with the American accent she never lost, belongs to a French tradition of women's voices: the *voix acidulée*, like a lemon candy. It is a pre-war tone. Danielle Darrieux's had something of the same quality; so did Simone Simon's.

For foreigners who came to France after the Second World War, the legend of the young and seductive Josephine Baker had to be taken on faith. Her impact on the night life of Paris in the 1920s was a matter of chronicled social history, and her continued presence made her seem a true part of the city—particularly when one compared her with the visiting writers of the same period, described as fabled, and who, in fact, had no French friends, never learned the language, and did nothing but come and go. There were French writers' hopeless accounts of her dancing the Charleston (pronounced "sharl-ess-tun"), say, in *Le Boeuf sur le toit*, by Maurice Sachs: "Angle of bust to legs, angles of thighs to calves. . . . Double angle of legs bent open and shut in parentheses."

Paris was still full of men who had seen, met, and adored her. Some of them were unexpected. To the Polish poet Aleksander Wat, she was a vivid memory, captured somewhere between his life as a young Warsaw poet and his life as a prisoner in Lubyanka. He said she was like a tropical bird; and he would throw back his great head, with the mop of gray hair, and produce a song, or sound, in which no words were intelligible. That shrill, eerie twittering must have been what European ears caught of Baker and transformed into something tropical and strange. To North Americans, she just simply didn't have much of a voice, whatever else she could do.

JOSEPHINE BAKER, COURTESY OF THE GOTHAM BOOK MART AND GALLERY

Phyllis Rose, in her impressively researched social biography, quotes other comparisons. People recalled Baker as something like a snake, a giraffe, a kangaroo, a hummingbird. Rose also quotes an American who never bothered to see her, but remembers that "she just wiggled her fanny and all the French fell in love with her." What was her magic? The photographs in *Jazz Cleopatra* give only the faintest of clues. In her endless string of comeback performances, Baker no longer moved as legend had it. (It is quite possible that one had the repeated bad luck to see her on an off night, for many people still hold quite a different opinion.) But sometimes she flicked her double-jointed forefingers, smiling, suddenly so young and mischievous, so playful, so knowing and so innocent, that some essential part of her vitality, her ability to get an audience on her side, became plain. Still, it took a push of imagination to see the 19-year-old carried onstage at the Théâtre du Champs Elysées, wearing (in Janet Flanner's classic description) a "pink feather between her limbs."

Too young ever to have seen her, Rose is helpful and exact in her description of how Baker arrived in Paris at the right moment. Rose's sections on Europe's discovery of African art and of black American dancers and musicians (the two somehow fused in the European perception of blacks), and on the large colony of expatriate black Americans in Paris in the 1920s, are among the most rewarding in her book. (There was to be a second wave of expatriate black musicians in the 1950s. Those who stayed often became very French-minded; indeed, few white expatriates ever moved so deeply into French life as, for instance, Sidney Bechet. Not enough has been written about them.)

Jazz Cleopatra is a model of tact, which is a quality and a failing. Of course, there are living witnesses to be considered, touchy and edgy. There are the 12 adopted children, now in their 30s. (To have had children of her own that close in age, Rose points out, Baker would have needed to produce three sets of twins within three years—only for the first half dozen.) There are feelings to be spared and lawsuits to be avoided. Prudence demands that a considerable amount of dodgy or self-serving testimony be taken as it stands.

We accept the idea that children selected by their adoptive mother only as representatives of various races and religions were a real family and "never felt unloved." To a good many outsiders, who had no means of knowing more than whatever drifted through the fuzzy channels of Paris gossip, the children's situation at the time seemed messy and unfortunate. Photographs that showed them lined up, as an exemplary multiracial experiment, made some magazine readers uncomfortable; their faces, sometimes resentful, often unsmiling, were like school or institutional faces. Knowing nothing about their family life, one gathered only that they did not like having their picture taken.

Raising children costs money. By the time the first few had been collected (two Asians, a Finn, a black from South America, a white French child, and a French-Jewish baby she named Moïse, perhaps in honor of Moses and Pharaoh's daughter), Baker's chateau in southwest France was sinking under a mortgage, surrounded by a failing menagerie and amusement park. Her disastrous set of circumstances did not prevent her from collecting more babies: two from North Africa, a black from the Ivory Coast, a Venezuelan Indian, another French child, and a Moroccan. (The only country that absolutely refused to contribute to the experiment was Israel.) Although questions were raised, no one was ever able to explain how, in a country like France, where it is difficult to adopt a child, most particularly a foundling, she was allowed to dash into a hospital and remove an infant found on a rubbish dump before a search had been made to see if the child had any relatives.

In the mid-1950s Baker recorded the most dismaying song of her repertoire, "Dans Mon Village." It was about the first five of the children. ("We don't need him," her husband, a French musician, had pointed out when she brought home an ordinary French child. They already had the Finn, white and Christian. The slot had been filled.) "They are little angels," Baker sang, "When they grow up, they will sing 'J'ai Deux Amours,' " her own greatest success. Their origins were part of the song: "One is the color of night, the fourth is the color of blood." Actually, the fourth was the Finn. "My maman's heart loves them all," she piped, which was undoubtedly true. Her husband finally gave up and moved to South America.

Baker had been sent out to domestic labor at seven; at ten, provider of Christmas presents for her family, she said, "There is no Santa Claus. I'm Santa Claus"; at 11 she saw the horror of a race riot. She died in her sleep, in Paris, surrounded by good reviews, just two days after opening in a new show (her final effort to save a home for the children) at the Bobino music hall in Montparnasse, and she was buried from the church of Sainte Marie-Madeleine, "la Madeleine," at the top of Rue Royal. About 20,000 mourners clogged adjacent streets. Her funeral was attended by the mayor of Paris, the minister of culture, and a general who was the son-in-law of Charles de Gaulle.

How the Catholic service was arranged is the last of Baker's mysteries. Was she, at the time of her death, a Roman Catholic? Like so much of her life, even after diligent research, details are left in mist. It is not clear whether she had actually converted to Judaism, and if so, from what. On her coffin there was a large floral Star of David, as well as a floral cross. Although she had been divorced four times, she was granted the Catholic religious service refused Colette—divorced, if one may say so, only twice. (Colette was a pure pagan, but the refusal of the service was much remarked at the time of her death, in 1954.) Baker died in 1979, just short of her 69th birthday. Like Colette, she was given a state funeral. Unlike Colette's, it was seen on state television. A radio announced, "There is a place where nightingales sing, and there she is today." No doubt about it: she made that, too.

MAVIS GALLANT is the author most recently of *In Transit* (Random House), a collection of stories.

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Paleface and Redskin

By Irving Howe

The People and Uncollected Stories by Bernard Malamud edited and introduced by Robert Giroux

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 267 pp., $18.95)

"You may be a horse to your mother," says the peddler Yozip to his nag in Bernard Malamud's last, unfinished novel, *The People*, "but to me nothing less than a friend."

Anyone acquainted with the stories of Sholom Aleichem will quickly recognize behind Yozip's words the looming presence of Tevye the Milkman, that prototype of modern Jewish humaneness. This clue noticed on Malamud's second page, everything falls nicely into place. The somber realism of Malamud's early work is being lightened on behalf of a folklike tale or comic fable; the moral solidity of Aleichem's Tevye is being transformed, through incidents crossing farce and pain, into Yozip's chosenness. Sardonic reflections on the privilege of being chosen streak though Yiddish literature, and, consciously or not, Malamud has picked up the theme with beautiful effect.

Wandering through the Pacific Northwest shortly after the Civil War, Yozip stumbles into the town of Wilberforce, where he is mistaken for the new marshal. Two local thugs, straight out of low-budget Westerns and antipathetic to the thought of any marshal, try to make the Jew "dance," but Yozip, a pacifist with a good left, lays both of them out cold. Watching this encounter, a local Indian chief named Joseph decides that Yozip is the kind of man his tribe needs, and thereupon orders his braves to kidnap him.

Back on the Indian grounds, Yozip is initiated into the tribe (called simply The People) and renamed Jozip. The braves admire his skill with bow and arrow (hardly something he learned in the old country), but the peddler himself isn't quite sure that being an Indian, or a bit later, becoming the chief, is his true vocation. Still, as a man of justice who sees that the Indians are being harassed by U.S. troops intent upon driving them out of their pleasant valley, Jozip can't refuse. It's a moral obligation, and besides, as Tevye says, what are shoulders for but burdens?

Malamud sprinkles his opening chapters with charming bits of byplay between peddler and chief. "Once red man and white were brothers," intones the chief, "what one brother had of two he gave one to the other." "Of cuss," agrees the peddler, "who needs everything?" And later: "Where do you come from?" asks the chief. "I come from Russia. I am a socialist." "What is a socialist?" "We believe in a better world. Not to hurt but to help people."

When Malamud died in 1986, he was a few months away from finishing *The People*. He left drafts for 16 of the 21 projected chapters, and he had revised the first several. Completed, the novel would, I think, have been a minor masterpiece, at once amusing and stirring. But even as it stands, it is an enchanting piece of work, clear evidence that in his last months Malamud had managed to recover from the creative floundering of his previous several years. He had come to feel that the "magic realism" of his famous stories, that happy mixture of fable and factuality, had worn thin, and in his last few novels he was obviously looking about for new subjects and new styles—though not, I think, with notable success. This is a familiar experience for a writer approaching old age. For Malamud, it seems to have been acutely painful.

On the face of it, the transfiguration of Yozip the peddler into Jozip the chief is pure comedy, and Malamud milks every farfetched incident for the sheer fun of it. But this transfiguration also carries weight and meaning in the narrative, for where else does a Jew—I mean the rare exemplary Jew like Tevye or Yozip—belong except with the downtrodden and the deceived? "So now I am a real Indian, Jozip sadly, yet not unhappily thought. So what can I do for my people?"

A lot. Speaking in a mixture of pastoral eloquence and Brooklynese, Jozip pleads with the thick-headed Colonel of the U.S. Army:

> Please, Mr. Cohnel, I will speak to you with soft words. This is the valley of our tribe. The Great White Father gave us this valley and also our Chief Joseph signed the papers. For fifteen years our people lived here and also they have fished here in our big river, and we love this earth and bury in it our dead.

Stuffed with the power of manifest destiny, the "Cohnel" replies that "preachment won't put any pork in your pot." "From pork," comments Jozip, "I am not interested." (Indian chief or not, a Jew remains a Jew.)

Jozip worries that he has not pleaded well enough, he sees that he has failed to budge authority, "yet he heard dignity in the words he had said. 'If you speak with your heart,' he told himself, 'the words fix themselves together in the right way. They will say what you want them to say.' " But to "the Cohnel" all this sounds "like Jew talk. . . . Nobody can trust these goddamned Indians."

The People hops along nimbly, as a fable should, in brief, self-contained chapters. Jozip holds a tribal council. What shall we Indians do? Fight? Hopelessly outgunned. Surrender? Not Indians. So as the leader bearing the fate of The People, Jozip comes up with a plan to scurry away to Canada, where Indians may find more humane treatment than in the puffed-up USA. Quite as if he had inherited the gifts of the biblical Joseph, as well as those of Moses, Jozip organizes the tribe for its trek north, only now and then allowing himself the heretical thought that it might be better if he ran back to his cousin Plotnick in Chicago. But Jozip is a man of justice, and a man of justice does not abandon his people.

There follow some battles with the U.S. Army, and even though Jozip remains "a Jew who lived among a tribe of Indians with peace raging in his heart," he shows a gift for guerrilla maneuver, gaining a victory or two by outflanking the slow-moving regulars. But the odds are against The People, and against justice too. As the Yiddish proverb goes, justice is in Galicia—that is, somewhere else.

At this point Malamud's narrative breaks off. His notes indicate that he would have had Jozip return to Chicago and study law, so as to become the advocate of The People. Somehow—it's not clear—there would have been an ending of justice vindicated, or at least Jozip fulfilled. But the unfinished text ends powerfully enough, with the broken Indians shipped off to a Kansas reservation. The last sentence reads: "The moaning of the Indians began as the freight cars were moving along the tracks."

The People is an elegant work of art, occasionally edging upon whimsy, but saved from the faults of whimsy by its moral sinew and its delicacy of tone. Its central figure represents a triumph in the rare fictional art of embodying goodness. As for the Indians, they may be of a kind never seen in heaven or on earth, but in Malamud's fable they come to be impressive and stately figures. Simply as prose, the writing in *The People*, especially its opening chapters, is very fine—lucid and easy.

I suppose the book contains a sort of message that Jews—though really, all human beings—ought to be at least a little like the admirable Jozip. ("Not to hurt but to help people.") Malamud, indifferent to literary fashions, always wrote out of a strong attachment to humanist values, and his firm, restrained compassion figures strongly in this last novel. He rarely stops to make or underscore a point; he knows that an achieved narrative is enough, and he trusts his company of players.

I also suppose the book is going to be manhandled by the symbolism corps (Joseph, The People, the Indian god Quodish, the freight cars, etc.). Yet it doesn't really need any heavy exegesis or symbolic overlay. Here lightness of touch and spirit is all, and I suspect that Malamud would also have wanted the book to be taken lightly, which is to say, with an amused sadness or a sad amusement, but without elaborate structures of interpretation.

Of the 16 uncollected stories in this book, about half constitute apprentice work, written mostly in the 1940s. These stories already bear Malamud's personal stamp: they are morally earnest, compassionate, and nicely put together. Yet I think I know why he decided not to publish them. They droop with a dispirited realism, a flatness of voice. They start and end with suffering, something that is always at the heart of Malamud's work, but they fail to reach that moment of surprise or illumination that lifts the best of his later stories.

One early story, "The Grocery Store," I found moving, perhaps because its setting, the poor immigrant Jewish streets, is one I shared in my youth with Malamud. A decent piece of work, "The Grocery Store" remains no more than a faithful picture of remembered life, without that touch of "invention" Malamud would always try for. If you compare this story with a somewhat later one, "The Loan," you can see how Malamud succeeded in getting past the sluggishness of an honorable realism while still, even in his freest fables, retaining a fundament of realistic notation. "The Loan" ends with a bit of action—two poor Jews embrace and sigh over their lost youth: "They pressed mouths together and parted forever." That must seem implausible to anyone familiar with the life Malamud drew upon: immigrant Jewish men didn't press mouths together. Yet in the story itself, this works beautifully, providing a moment of intense elevation, a compact in defeat.

About the later stories, mostly published in the 1980s, though perhaps written somewhat earlier, there is not much to say. They are diverse in subject, competent enough, and rather dull. Two of them, fictional mini-biographies of Virginia Woolf and Alma Mahler, were experiments that might have led to something fresh if Malamud had had more time. As it is, these two experimental pieces seem unfinished: there is something flat and toneless, something unprovisioned, about them. Malamud was obviously groping toward a new mode. The stories reveal little, however, about the two fascinating women he chose as his subjects or about what he was trying to do as a writer.

What these later stories show is a writer struggling with the exhaustion of his subject. "I may have done as much as I can with the sort of short story I have been writing so long—the somewhat mythological, biblically oriented tales,"

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Malamud wrote to himself in 1983-84. The struggle of an aging writer to find a second voice can be terribly painful. The fact that in his last sustained piece Malamud did find that voice should bring joy to all his admirers. If only fate had given him a few more months.

Still, power to *The People*!

IRVING HOWE is working on a book about the novel titled *Selected Short Subjects*.

Bork Chop

BY MICKEY KAUS

The Tempting of America: The Political Seduction of the Law by Robert H. Bork

(Free Press, 448 pp., $22.50)

Battle for Justice: How the Bork Nomination Shook America by Ethan Bronner

(W. W. Norton, 399 pp., $22.50)

"If someone proposed a law that guaranteed substantial wage increases for law professors," a law professor once said, "I'd be first in line to lobby for it. But not Bob Bork. He's a man of principle." The idea of Robert Bork, as fashioned by Robert Bork, has always been an appeal to this virtue of intellectual honesty. In a legal culture dominated by liberals who manipulate the Constitution to "do good," Bork alone would apply "rigorous legal reasoning" and "follow where logic leads." ("I do not see how I can avoid the conclusions stated. . .") Bork's opponents were "result-oriented" (as opposed to rigor-oriented). The trouble with constitutional law, according to Bork, was "its lack of a theory." Bork had the theory. He was, said Ronald Reagan upon nominating him for the Supreme Court, the "most intellectually powerful advocate of judicial restraint"—the "Einstein of the law," in the words of a pro-Bork lobbyist.

Since his rejection by the Senate, Bork has booked himself a career as an Oliver North-style right-wing hero. He travels the country giving often lucrative lectures, denouncing the "mendacity, brutality, and intellectual vulgarity" of his foes, proclaiming a "war to control the legal culture." Bork's followers, especially the editorialists at the *Wall Street Journal*, have kept alive his legend: he had been (as a telegram someone sent Bork put it) "a giant surrounded by pygmies," brought down by a vicious campaign of distortion organized by liberal special interest groups. Bork's book, *The Tempting of America*, seems designed in part to stoke the paranoia of his cult.

True, paranoia on Bork's part is amply justified. There is a liberal legal culture, and it was out to get him. It wanted to get him in order to protect court-imposed policies (most obviously *Roe* v. *Wade*'s right to abortion) that a large coalition of liberal groups liked. And it got him, in part, by sleazily misrepresenting some of his views. Most famously, a narrow Bork ruling was falsely characterized as favoring "sterilizing workers." But there were other nasty distortions, not all by fringe interest groups. Senator Edward Kennedy charged that in "Bork's America . . . schoolchildren could not be taught about evolution," when Bork had never opposed teaching evolution. Senator Paul Simon implied Bork might approve the pro-slavery decision in *Dred Scott*.

But if it's wrong to be "result-oriented" when judging constitutional law; that's surely the proper orientation when judging the Bork battle. Was Bork a "giant" of law and logic denied his rightful place on the Court? After reading both Bork's self-defense and Ethan Bronner's entertaining and fair-minded account of the confirmation fight, it's hard to take the Bork Legend very seriously—even if you think, as I do, that Bork is often right about the sins of liberal legalism.

The Tempting of America aims quite self-consciously for the Allan Bloom market. Bork cites Bloom approvingly, and rails against all the familiar enemies: "moral relativism," "rampant individualism," "egalitarianism," "emoters and sensitives," and finally—inevitably, sadly—"the members of 'the 60's generation.' " Bork is another shell-shocked neocon refugee from the Days of Rage, scurrying across the quad, clutching his books and cursing the tear gas. Except in his special nightmare, yesterday's hippies and yippies have gone on to clerk for Justice Brennan.

The book is an awkward sandwich of history, dense argument, and memoir. The idea, presumably, was that the painful experience of Bork's non-confirmation would inform and enliven his arguments, and vice versa, but it doesn't work that way. The first two-thirds of the book form a self-contained defense of Bork's constitutional theory, with only occasional references to Bork's own history. Tacked on at the end is a 90-page personal account of the confirmation fight, titled "The Bloody Crossroads."

This memoir is especially disappointing. Bork is in no mood for self-examination, much less self-criticism. Does he have any second thoughts about his (in retrospect) disastrous performance at the televised Senate hearings on his nomination? If so, we don't hear them. Bork doesn't even dish much on what Senators talked about during his private "courtesy calls." (Kennedy told him it was "nothing personal.") Bronner's book contains more of Bork's memoirs than Bork's memoirs—how, for example, the Justice Department tried to get Bork to woo the heartland by talking about the right to bear arms ("Judge, goddamn, surely you've thought about the Second Amendment?").

It's the "dull" part of Bork's book—his substantive legal argument—that's interesting. Bork sees a Supreme Court constantly tempted (hence the book's title) to read into the Constitution justification for results that the Justices like. Initially, the judges who succumbed to this temptation were conservatives. The *Dred Scott* Court concocted constitutional protection for slavery; in the early 20th century, the "Nine Old Men" struck down minimum wage laws in the name of economic "liberty." More recently, Bork argues, the Court has invented constitutional rights to enforce the values of a liberal elite—which Bork, adhering to neoconservative doctrine, labels the "new class or the 'knowledge class.' " Among the "rights" manufactured by result-oriented judges (Bork says) are a "right to privacy" that includes the right to use contraceptives or have an abortion.

What about the biggest "result" of all, *Brown* v. *Board of Education*'s dismantling of segregation? Bork complains that approval of *Brown* has become a "test" any legal theorist who wants to be accepted must meet. But he chooses to meet it, declaring *Brown* a "great and correct decision."

Bork's crude view of recent constitutional history—a bunch of liberals scheming to accomplish through courts what they weren't sure they could accomplish through elected legislatures—seems accurate to me. It jibes with what we know of the Court from Bob Woodward and Scott Armstrong's *The Brethren*, in which Justice Potter Stewart, contemplating *Roe*, muses not about the right to privacy but about how "abortion was becoming one reasonable solution to population control." It jibes with my own experience at an elite law school, where professors freely admitted their political agenda. I'd even concede that, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, liberal dominance of the law schools was such that it took a certain amount of courage for Bork to vigorously denounce the rights-making enterprise of the Warren Court.

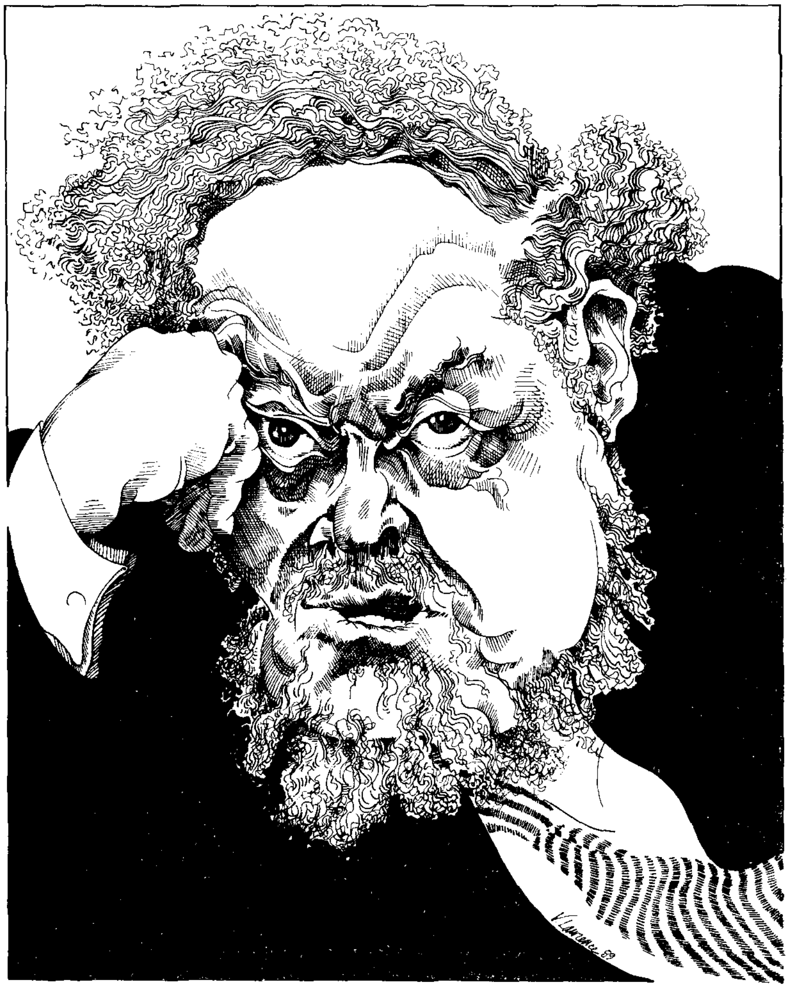
As Bork points out, it's not intrinsically liberal or conservative to want strict limits on the ability of judges to throw out laws. It's simply democratic. In the 1920s the reactionaries were the judicial activists. In the 1960s it was the liberals. Soon it may be the reactionaries again. The appeal of the Bork nomination was the promise that (in his words) "liberal revisionism will not be replaced by conservative revisionism." A key purpose of the Senate hearings was to figure out if he could be trusted to stick to this pledge of restraint.

But we can't really know if constitutional rights are "illegitimate" until we have a theory as to how they should be derived. The goal of *Tempting* is not just to convince us that liberals have used the Constitution to undermine democracy, but to defend Bork's particular system of constitutional interpretation: the doctrine of "original understanding," or "originalism" for short. Here the trouble begins.

Originalism says simply that the words of the Constitution mean no more, and no less, than what they were thought to mean at the time they were ratified. This meaning, in theory, is fixed. It does not change or "adapt" as the "needs of the nation" or "society" change—since that would give judges unlimited power to overturn laws according to their personal interpretation of what the nation "needs."

Bork has great fun debunking various liberal alternatives to originalism. Alexander Bickel thought courts should elaborate broader principles simply because they had a greater "capacity" than legislators to extract principles from "the evolving morality of our tradition." But who says voters can't choose to buck tradition, or make compromises that judges find unprincipled? Laurence Tribe asserts that Congress isn't a "satisfactory form of representation," a snooty argument against democracy you'd hope the Constitution put to rest. Various left-liberal academics have discovered in the Constitution a right to die, a right to welfare payments, a right to "soft drug use" ("autonomous control of internal psychic space"). Somewhat more relevant, these days, are the right-wing legal activists, such as Richard Epstein and Bernard Siegan, who are eager to expand the Constitution's strictures against the "taking" of property and the "impairment" of contracts in order to end progressive taxation, the minimum wage, and the Wagner Act. Bork knocks Epstein and Siegan down too, though with less enthusiasm.

But originalism also has its problems. They were the subject of considerable debate when Bork was nominated. The failure of *Tempting* is not just that Bork doesn't solve these problems. It's that he barely acknowledges their existence.



ROBERT BORK BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

First obvious problem: What happens when the "original understanding" is completely unclear? Bork has no consistent response in this situation. The Ninth Amendment, for example, says, "The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people." Does this mean there are rights (e.g., privacy) not listed in the Constitution that judges should protect? Bork instead declares the amendment unenforceable (previously, he compared it to an "inkblot"). "There being nothing to work with, the judge should refrain from working," he says. He also refuses to enforce, for similar reasons, a suggestive clause in the 14th Amendment denying states the power to "abridge the privileges and immunities of citizens."

But when he determines that the Framers had "no coherent theory of freedom of speech," he doesn't declare the First Amendment too vague. He says that "we are, then, forced to construct our own theory" as to what it means. Bork doesn't explain why he tosses some unclear provisions in the trash can and uses others as a base for constructing complicated theories of his own.

Second obvious problem: as Bork himself has admitted, when it comes to originalism "the question is always the level of generality the judge chooses when he states the idea or object of the Framers." Take the 14th Amendment's guarantee of "equal protection of the laws." Under some views of "original understanding," this language wouldn't have banned segregation—after all, those who ratified the amendment continued to maintain segregated schools themselves. Bork rejects this narrow view (as he must to justify *Brown*). The equal protection clause, he says, embodies a *principle* of racial equality. Segregation produced race inequality, so segregation was unconstitutional.

Fair enough. But as long as we're ignoring the actual, specific opinions of the ratifiers and discovering general principles, why stop at *racial* equality? Why isn't the principle a bit more general—say, a principle banning discrimination based on any immutable group trait, including gender as well as race? Why does Bork choose the narrower principle? He says he picks the "level of generality that interpretation of the words, structure, and history of the Constitution fairly supports." But he doesn't explain exactly how he's made this choice, and he doesn't lay out principles of textual, structural, or historical interpretation that would guide judges in other cases.

It's not as if Bork is unaware of this criticism of his theory. It was made, during his confirmation battle, in an influential article by Ronald Dworkin that was practically crammed down Bork's throat at the hearings by Senator Arlen Specter. And it's not as if a Borkian couldn't answer Dworkin if he tried. Here, as a sampler, are three interpretive principles Bork might (but doesn't) announce:

(1) A general constitutional principle can't override specific words in the Constitution to the contrary. (Under this rule the prohibition against "cruel and unusual punishment" wouldn't outlaw the death penalty, since the Fifth Amendment specifically mentions the existence of "capital" crimes.)

(2) If the Constitution's authors could easily have stated a principle, but didn't, then the document shouldn't be interpreted to require that principle. (This rule would probably kill off a generalized "right to privacy," which Madison could easily have provided for, as Bork notes. But it also calls into question Bork's race-only interpretation of the equal protection clause—it would have been easy to stick the word "race" into the clause. It's not there.)

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(3) No right should establish a principle so broad or subjective it would let judges undermine the principle of democracy. (This "structural" rule would probably stave off Dworkin's interpretation of the equal protection clause, which would ban "discrimination against any minority when the discrimination reflects only prejudice." Giving judges the power to strike down any law they think reflects prejudice gives them the power to strike down practically any law.)

You get the idea. A *real* theory of the Constitution based on "original understanding" would get quite complicated. Once you start deriving principles of varying generality, and once you start reasoning from structure in addition to history, a great many different arguments become possible—as do a great many different results. We're far away from what seemed to be a simple originalist world in which a Bork or Meese could somehow definitively pronounce liberal decisions "improper" or lacking "rigorous legal reasoning." Some liberal results Bork doesn't like might become quite "proper." Maybe the "principle" of equal protection does apply forcefully to sex discrimination. Maybe, as John Hart Ely suggests, the Constitution's "*structural*" *principle of democracy* does support a rule of "one person, one vote."

Could it be that Bork doesn't want to face these possibilities because he is, himself, a wee bit "result-oriented"? Here we must return to Bork's infamous 1971 *Indiana Law Journal* article on the First Amendment. (Bork complains that this "old article" was only "tentative and speculative," and doesn't necessarily reflect his views. He then argues that "most of it still seems to me entirely correct." Lawyers call this "pleading in the alternative.")

Significantly, the 1971 article barely mentions the idea of "original understanding." Indeed, as noted earlier, Bork quickly dismisses the intentions of those who wrote the First Amendment, and instead concentrates on deriving structural principles that might define it. The rest of his argument is hard to summarize, because it is so strained. In an old Brandeis opinion Bork finds four possible "benefits" to be derived from speech: development of individual faculties, enjoyment of speech itself, provision of a social safety valve, and the discovery and spread of political truth. Bork then knocks out the first two functions of speech, saying that other activities ("working as a barmaid, engaging in sexual activity, playing tennis") provide the same sort of "gratification," so how can judges single out speech? He knocks out the "safety valve" function, saying it involves "judgments of expediency for the political branches." That leaves the "search for political truth." Bork is then in a position to argue that the Constitution protects only "political" speech, not "scientific" or "literary" expression, or pornography.

Now, it's not unusual for constitutional scholars to single out "political" speech as the First Amendment's core (although it's quite possible to come up with equally plausible and broader First Amendment principles). But unlike those other scholars, Bork wouldn't even protect all political speech. Speech advocating violations of law, or the forcible overthrow of the government, has "no political value within a republican system," he says. He defends the prosecution of various socialists and Communists for giving speeches or going to meetings.

More important, Bork's supposedly inexorable 1971 logic ("I do not see how I can avoid . . .") should be completely unacceptable from his later perspective of hard-core "originalism." *After all, to an originalist, there's one* perfectly good, indeed dispositive, reason for courts to distinguish between speech and, say, tennis, protecting enjoyment of the former and not the latter. The reason is that the Constitution says "freedom of speech," not "freedom of tennis." Did Bork rethink the results of his 1971 article when he fervently embraced originalism? Apparently not. He simply reaffirms those results in *Tempting*. Perhaps that's because the results, rather than the reasoning, are what he cares about.

That thought fairly leaps from Bork's discussion, in *Tempting*, of the flag-burning issue. Bork attempts to explain why courts could protect someone who burns the Constitution, but not someone who burns the flag. His argument: "Marines did not fight their way up Mount Suribachi on Iwo Jima to raise a copy of the Constitution on a length of pipe." This is not the philosophy of "original understanding." It is the philosophy of "any weapon to hand." It has more to do with Bork's lecture fees than with the Constitution.

On September 12, 1987, shortly before the hearings began, Bork and his brain trust met to plan his testimony. According to Bronner, Washington lawyer Lloyd Cutler (a prized Democrat-for-Bork) told the judge "you must separate yourself from the Meese-Reynolds school of jurisprudence." Never mind that Bork's fame was precisely as the architect of Meese-Reynolds jurisprudence. In effect, Cutler asked Bork to renege on his principles. The amazing thing is that Bork took the advice. At the moment of Bork's own temptation, he quickly succumbed.

The result was Bork's "confirmation conversion" on free speech and women's rights. On speech, Bork appeared to abandon his position that advocacy of civil disobedience isn't protected. Bork argues (with characteristic self-contradiction) that his views had always conformed to the Court's current doctrine, and that he never said his views now conformed with current doctrine. Neither is true. At the hearings, Bork didn't (as he contends) merely say he would "abide by" current law. He implied he'd changed his mind: "I have expanded to where I am about where the current Supreme Court is, . . . it is a good position," he told a surprised Senator Patrick Leahy.

Most surprising, however, was Bork's new, improved position on sex discrimination. Bork, remember, had long argued that the "original understanding" of the equal protection clause embodied a principle of equality among races—not between sexes. Suddenly, at the hearings, Bork announced he favored a "reasonableness" test that could strike down race, sex, and perhaps other types of statutory classifications. A racial classification, Bork explained, would never be seen as "reasonable." A sex classification would "sometimes" be "reasonable." Bork had never stated this position before.

It was, in truth, a stunning position for him to take. First, a "reasonableness" test is no more a part of the "original understanding" of the 14th Amendment than the liberal interpretations that Bork claimed to revile. The old Bork would have said the doctrine came out of nowhere. (Actually, Bronner reveals, it came from the Reagan Justice Department, where it was "cobbled together" for Bork in order to answer the accusations of women's groups.)

Second, if ever there was an open invitation to meddlesome judicial activism, it is the "reasonableness" test. Practically any democratically enacted law could be voided if a judge found one of its classifications "unreasonable." Bork even said the definition of "unreasonableness" would expand over time. What did Bork's theory of the Constitution mean, if not that its principles are unchanging? Yet there he was, on national TV, gibbering like a standard-issue Warren Court liberal about how "as the culture changes and as the position of women in society changes, those distinctions which seemed reasonable now seem outmoded stereotypes and. . . they get struck down."

On page 64 of *The Tempting of America*, the old, trenchant Bork declares: "Once the Court begins to employ its own notions of reasonableness in order to decide which classifications should be treated like race, it *cannot* avoid legislating the Justices' personal views." On page 330 of *The Tempting of America*, the new, adaptable Bork repeats his televised endorsement of a "reasonableness" test. "Rigor," anyone?

Bork's greatest failure, Bronner observes, was his surprising inability to whip up popular resentment against liberal reliance on government-by-judiciary. An unhealthy side effect is that many Democrats may see the Bork vote as a ratification of all the excesses of the Warren and Burger years—"a kind of constitutional amendment," Bronner calls it. That would be especially unfortunate now, when liberals are beginning to throw off their addiction to freshly minted constitutional rights—learning, in states like Florida, New Jersey, and Virginia, that they can fight and win the abortion issue at the ballot box.

A healthy side effect of the Bork fight has been to discredit the stuffy idea that the Senate, when advising and consenting, shouldn't consider the ideology of a Supreme Court nominee. Of course it should. Bork's First Amendment views alone, reiterated in *Tempting*, are enough to justify a "no" vote. Senators might also have applauded Bork for advocating judicial restraint while doubting he really had the grand theory that would sustain it. And Bork's last-minute, cut-to-fit doctrinal changes raised the question of whether he could be trusted to hew to such a theory in any case. If Bork was willing to abandon his principles to achieve the result of getting on the Court, what was to keep him from abandoning his principles in order to achieve other concrete results once he got there? In the end, the champion of "original understanding" and majority rule was beaten by the very majoritarian process the Framers of the Constitution established. They understood more than he imagined. ●

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The Muller's Tale

BY LEON WIESELTIER

The Examined Life
Philosophical Meditations
by Robert Nozick

(Simon and Schuster, 308 pp., $21.95)

Calculemus! The great tradition of modern Anglo-American philosophy has been a little bedeviled by Leibniz's cry, by his dream of an Eden of definitions, of a paradise of formal rules, from which all of philosophy could be deduced and abandoned. "If controversies were to arise," wrote Leibniz, "there would be no more need of disputation between two philosophers than between two accountants. For it would suffice to take their pencils in their hands, to sit down to their slates, and to say to each other (with a friend as witness, if they liked): Let us calculate." The philosopher could extract himself from the jumble of the real world, so slovenly in the multiplicity of its things and its events; rise to the purity and the simplicity and the clarity of mathematics; live like an accountant and think like an angel; draw near to God.

Leibniz never fully established a *characteristica universalis*, a *doctrina formarum*, an *ars combinatoria*. That was the achievement, almost 200 years later, of the obscure, brilliant, and repulsive Gottlob Frege, who invented the first complete system of formal logic. Frege's epochal work was on the foundations of mathematics, but his elegant symbolism broached a greater gain for philosophy. From the propositions of logic it was a small step to the logic of propositions.

A young Leibnizian named Bertrand Russell discerned in Frege's discoveries a tool for the analysis of propositions into their most ultimate and least reducible elements, which were logical forms, or "logical atoms." Russell was careful never to blur the boundary between philosophy and mathematics; he maintained that the axioms for which Leibniz longed were not the premises of philosophy but the results of philosophy, that a self-contained and self-justifying world of definitions and deductions was different in kind from "the world of science and daily life," which required also the instrument of intuition. Still, if philosophy could not be made mathematical, logic could be made philosophical. Statements about the world could be subjected to, translated into, the operations of logic. *Calculemus*. But note: statements, not things. Language had a logic because logic was, in some sense, a language. When the method of philosophy became logic, the subject of philosophy became language. And so began the bitter reign of the p's and the q's.

It was not long before the Fregean fulfillment of the Leibnizian dream began to show all kinds of odd and cheerless results. There were murmurings—not against the imprisonment in language, but against the strictness of the imprisonment. It turned out that the logical atomist's respect for reality did not guard sufficiently against the absolutist impulse in the search for deep order and fixed essences, against the universalist loss of interest in differences, against the appetite for finality. In one noteworthy instance, logic seemed to provide even a rational basis for mysticism. Who can blame the early Wittgenstein for finding in Frege's vision of "a realm of what is objective though not actual" an occasion for religious excitement?

The late Wittgenstein, that's who. He blamed the early Wittgenstein for rather a lot, and presided over the beginnings of a breakdown in his own tradition. The search for the logical structure of language gave way to the search for the characteristics of actual languages. (They were called "natural languages," with the unnaturalness of the other reading of language left implied.) The meaning of a word or an expression was sought not in its logical function, but in its use. "Meaning is use" became the slogan behind which a good deal of the messiness of the world was restored to philosophy. A new ideal of precision in philosophical analysis was proclaimed, a taxonomical ideal, and it hungered for the grubby details.

But "ordinary language philosophy" scarred the spirit. It deflated philosophy and trivialized it. It tore down, but it did not build up. It even encouraged a kind of anti-intellectualism. For, whatever the meaning of truth, or goodness, or beauty, the way to the discovery of its meaning surely does not lie in a study of the manner in which "true" or "good" or "beautiful" is spoken by your lighting designer. "Ordinary language philosophy," moreover, was unforgivably indifferent to the sociology of language. Differences in usage owe something, after all, to differences in social and cultural position; and by failing to take heed of that rather elementary fact, the ordinary language philosopher was breaking new ground in bourgeois ideology.

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, analytic philosophy was in a condition of crisis. It was trapped between notation and belles lettres. It was in transports of professionalism. It was proceeding as if Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud had never lived. It was not philosophy you could live by, not philosophy you could teach your children. (I remember being warned, as a student, against the sterility of philosophical logic by one of philosophical logic's masters. When my eyes failed to light up as he spoke of the differences in the performance of certain adverbs in certain types of sentences, he seemed relieved, and I knew I had a friend.) There were pressures for change, for a recovery of philosophy by the humanities, coming from literary theory and political theory. At the same time there were countervailing pressures for a new *calculemus*, coming from the philosophies of the sciences, and from economics.

The writings of Robert Nozick—*Philosophical Explanations*, which appeared in 1981, and now *The Examined Life*—are useful documents of philosophy's recent torments. In the earlier book, Nozick called for "philosophy without arguments." Those are fighting words. Nozick seemed to recoil from philosophical authority for moral and intellectual reasons. He detected a desire for power, a "coercive activity," in the ruthlessness of ordinary argument. A postmodernist in the seminar room, he was struck by the cacophony of ideas that preceded him, and by the failure of any one of these ideas to retire the others. "Can philosophy have an aim other than proof?" Nozick's answer was, yes; philosophy can explain, can clarify, can make a correction here and a correction there, can instruct, can please. It can originate in "puzzlement, curiosity, a desire to understand, not a desire to produce uniformity of belief." Philosophy is "mulling it over."

In his new book, a collection of "philosophical meditations," Nozick insists again upon a more digressive and less conclusive mode of thought. Here

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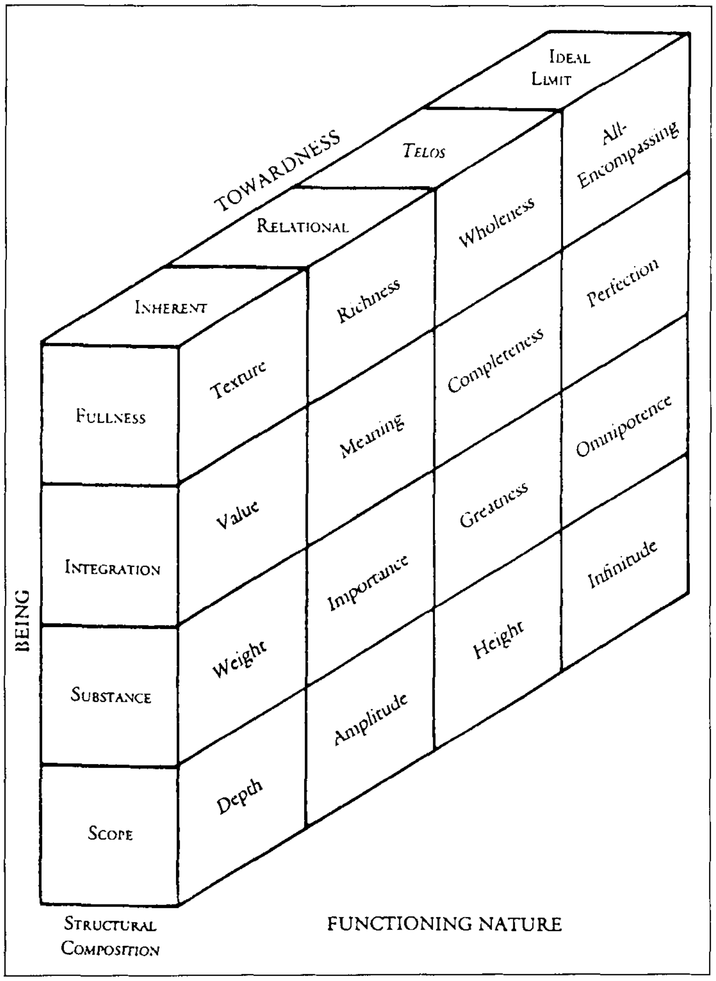
he recoils in particular from the professionalization of his discipline. He wants to bring the old troubles back:

> Life or living is not the kind of topic whose investigation philosophers find especially rewarding. Give us specific problems to solve or paradoxes to resolve, sharp questions with enough angle or spin, an elaborate intellectual structure to move within or modify, and we can etch sharply a theory, press intuitive principles to surprising consequences, and perform intellectual figure eights, all the while meeting clear standards of success.



HARD TO FIGURE 1

The author of such a confession is a long way from theories of description and truth tables and principles of verification and the rest. *The Examined Life* promises to illustrate a style of philosophy that is more appropriate to the object of its reflection, which is life:

> . . . thinking about life is more like mulling it over, and the more complete understanding this brings does not feel like crossing a finishing line while still managing to hold onto the baton; it feels like growing up more.

The less said about Nozick on growing up, the better. (An anxiety about maturity almost never leaves him. "Isn't it ludicrous for someone just one generation away from the shtetl, a *pisher* from Brownsville and East Flatbush in Brooklyn, even to touch on the topics of the monumental thinkers?" That is certainly one of the least dignified sentences ever written by a Jew.) But his insistence upon narrowing the distance between philosophy and experience is admirable.

"I want to think about living and what is important in life," he nobly begins. He does not bring mind and the world closer together, I am happy to report, by means of what might be called "ordinary life philosophy." Nozick is not complacent in the fashionable way. He does advert to something he calls "normal human life," and he does assert sentimentally that "reality here is reality enough" (and claims, quite falsely, that "that is what the very greatest works of art, by their own reality, show us"). But he does not quite celebrate "most of us as we currently are," and our assumptions, and our memories, and our traditions, as many of his colleagues do. The everyday is only a part of Nozick's evidence. He scours the extremes, too, what he calls "the special experiences"; and the depth of his interest in mysticism, and in Eastern theories, would have delighted William James.

More important, Nozick does not mistake his life for all life, is not an apologist for things as they are, because his mind is enviably free. *The Examined Life* is a small gem of intellectual imagination. Reality does not hold this man too tightly in its grip. He flips it a thousand ways; and sometimes the flips cast light. There is no modification, no distortion, no transformation of "our" world that Nozick is afraid to consider. His mental energy is extraordinary. He is a master of possibilities.

Alas, he is also a monster of possibilities. Unwilling to coerce, he is unable to convince. His mind seems not only free, but loose. The problem with Nozick's "philosophical pluralism" is its weightlessness. Unlike philosophical arguments, he wrote in *Philosophical Explanations*, "philosophical explanations can be offered tentatively." Fine, offer them tentatively; but completely without conviction? In *The Examined Life*, he writes that "we do not want to get committed to any one particular understanding, or locked into it." Why not? Surely certainty is sometimes possible. Surely certainty is not the same thing as coercion.

"It seems to me I value truth less than do other philosophers I know." That is a startling admission from a man who went on to write as a philosopher about "Dying," "Creating," "Love's Bond," "Emotions," "Value and Meaning," "Being More Real," "Enlightenment," and the like. Nozick's lack of enthusiasm for truth is not an exercise in skepticism. It is a self-inflicted philosophical inhibition of another kind: "Do I value truth less or love understanding more?" It is a rhetorical question. He loves understanding more. Unfortunately the difference between truth and understanding is not plain. There are true understandings and false understandings. Nor is the distinction between truth and understanding the distinction between science and art; Nozick's "understanding," at least in practice, is not Dilthey's. So I don't see that understanding lets Nozick off truth's hook. And I don't see why understanding burdens him so much less. Maybe he thinks that truth is an early form of totalitarianism. (His book includes one of the oddest and most pretentious speculations about the Holocaust I have ever read.)

"Perhaps life itself defies formulating any general theory to cover it all." Perhaps. We have heard the admonition for more than a century now. But there is a difference between the view that a general theory is undesirable and the view that truth is undesirable. Nozick's "pluralism" has the effect of making his thoughts matter less. It is a rare book on the great vexations of human life that is so lacking in urgency as this one. For that reason, *The Examined Life* degenerates, sadly and swiftly, into a clamorous display of its author's discursive skill. The mental energy turns out to be the main event. Call it *jouissance* or call it preening; but this is the performance of a philosophical athlete. Nozick is doing chin-ups at the gates of heaven.

Yes, we know what Ithacas mean. There is dignity in the journey, there is knowledge, there is adventure. The way to the goal is not merely the means to it; the activity of thought is one of the goals of thought. Philosophers have always taught that philosophy is also its own reward. But surely philosophy is not only its own reward. The problem with Nozick's loss of interest in truth is not relativism. (He neatly dispatched that trendy threat in the opening pages of *Philosophical Explanations*.) It is a diminishment of scale. He has come to the mountain not to climb it, but to shrink it (I can hear him wondering cleverly whether climbing is not a form of shrinking); and to show his stuff.

That is one of the most bizarre things about this bizarre book. Under the bodhi tree sits a decision theorist. It is heartening to hear Nozick repudiate "intellectual figure eights," except that *The Examined Life* is riddled with them. "Mulling it over," as Nozick mulls it over, is not quite the fresh start for philosophy, the chaste beginning, that it seems to be. It is, in fact, another cover for *calculemus*—more specifically, for a rampant and almost completely unexamined scientism. A few examples:

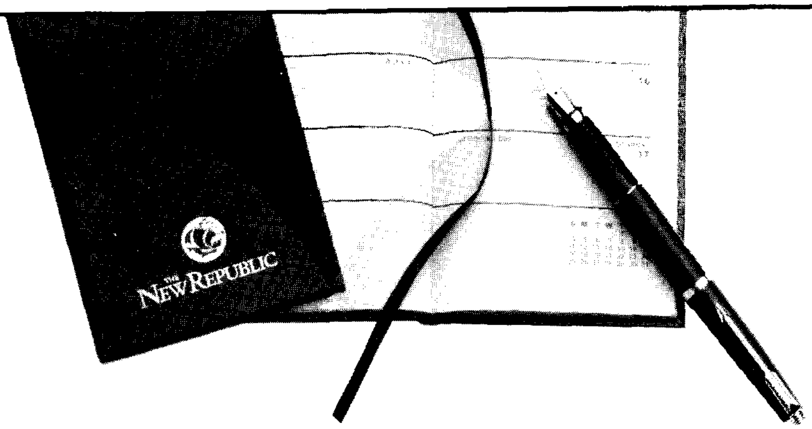
> We can see a person's regret over the way he has lived as being due to the ratio of the important things he has left undone to the important things he has done.

> Love between people, unlike imprinting with ducks, is not unalterable. . . . Why merely wait for a better person to turn up; why not actively seek to "trade up" to someone with a "higher score" along valuable dimensions?

> Let us suppose or fantasize that units of happiness and probabilities can be measured exactly. Then, for example, an event that we initially estimate as bringing us ten units of happiness later and which we think will have a .7 probability of happening later raises our level by seven units (.7 times 10) immediately. . . . When the event itself finally occurs, then, there is room for a rise of only three more units. Hence the anticipation now might feel better. . . .

> When a given person relates to reality on a given occasion, let us suppose there are three measures: a measure of how much his self's reality is brought to bear in that instance of relating, a measure also of the portion of total reality he relates to, and finally a measure of how real his relation to this reality is. (All of these measures are normalized, with the same possible maximum and minimum values.) Then the reality of his relating thus in this instance will be the arithmetical product of these three measures, the three measures multiplied by each other, the reality of his self brought to bear multiplied by the reality of the relation multiplied by the reality related to.

> Pascal recommended staking everything in life on the possibility of infinite gain, but we do better to recall the two types of error statisticians describe. . . .



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> A theory of the optimal formulation of ideals would consider ideals as practical tools for maximum movement, and specify the features they should possess, given human beings as they are (and as they would be changed in operating that ideal).

We are also offered diagrams or graphs of friendship, of sexual intimacy, of "someone's total happiness through life," of "a self's degree of reality in each period of time"; and, as the climax of the book, five full-page illustrations of "the polyhedron of reality." I reproduce "the complete structural composition segment of the polyhedron." (See Hard to Figure 1.)

Nozick, in sum, is divided against himself. He worries about the dangers of definitiveness and gives charts. He believes that philosophy is an art and does philosophy like a science. Surely these compulsive, cruelly misplaced quantifications take back his argument, at the conclusion of *Philosophical Explanations*, that philosophy is one of the humanities, just as they take back the worship of art that litters *The Examined Life*. For they betray a total lack of trust in the precision of words, sounds, and images; a proud ignorance of the uses of imprecision for the understanding of human life; a dogmatic confidence that all of human life is completely available to scientistic understanding. They are the work of a man sorely in need of what Mill called a crisis in his mental history.

I have not, I know, given the substance of Nozick's views. One reason is that Nozick has forbidden me to give it:

> Since wide-scale distortions get based on secondary descriptions, there is one precaution I can take: to ask that no reader summarize this book's contents or present slogans or catchwords from it, no school give examinations on the material it contains. Whether or not the unexamined life is worth living, the trickled-down philosophy is not worth following.

He flatters himself. Anyway, his philosophy is almost impossible to follow. That is the other reason.

The Examined Life is a turgid and idiosyncratic study of human connections with reality. It may be most fairly epitomized by the seven "reality principles" that Nozick adds to Freud's:

> What we want and value is an actual connection with reality.
> Just as our feelings should be appropriate to our evaluations when our attention is focused, so too in the focusing we should pay attention to the things around us in proportion to their importance.
> Being more real.
> Connecting with actuality in a way that has some impact on it.
> Become a vessel of light.
> Connect to the very highest and deepest reality.
> Being connected with and fully responsive to all of reality, not only the deepest or highest.

About one thing, oddly, Nozick has very little to say: what reality is. The "matrix of reality" illustrated by that silly polyhedron is a reckoning of the dimensions of reality as we experience it, not with reality as it is; for reality "is not the same as what exists." Nozick admits his own dissatisfaction with his meager discussion of metaphysics, which contains a few fine passages of trickled-down Heidegger. But he is more concerned with the uses of reality for the development of the self, with our "response" to reality. The controlling idea of Nozick's thought is "responsiveness." This seems to refer, in the common Romantic manner, to the degree of a person's alignment with the world, of his integration with reality. In *Philosophical Explanations*, responsiveness was conceived as "a tight organic unity between us and the world." (In *The Examined Life*, value itself is defined as organic unity.) Nozick seems to aspire to a kind of mild, properly derived ecstasy. His thinking stops short of the many troublesome consequences of the ideal of the organic and the longing for union.

The idea of responsiveness will never enjoy a mind stronger than Nozick's. Still, this strong mind has been led right into the New Age. *The Examined Life* is laced with New Age banalities, with echoes of Maslow and Aurobindo, with optimism about evil, with dialogical treacle ("my concern in writing here is the whole of our being; I would like to speak to your whole being, and to write from mine"), with the particular tinniness that results when spiritual language outruns spiritual experience.

The surest sign of the limits of Nozick's grasp is the absence of silence in his inquiry into life. These philosophical meditations leave, finally, an impression of noise. They reveal a man barrelling through mysteries. He seems dead to the difference between mysteries and puzzles. There is no halting before nothing-

Hans Reading, Hans Smoking

My mother, poised around behavior, would say
you are sitting there reading and smoking, Hans,
and this would describe for her, to her utter

satisfaction, what it is you are doing. . .
Knowing you I guess you are stationed there
in grief, dream, and worry—your car broken

down, the mechanic wanting money, and you without,
for the moment, what it takes—and you thinking
of love lost as you read that impossible book

your father last gave you. . . I see you smoking
and as an addict myself I know this is something
you are barely doing. . . The habit smokes itself

and you, you are turning the page where the woman
from New Orleans, like your woman, goes to Manhattan.
I suppose my mother, in her mania, could never afford

to think there was anything hovering, anything *behind*
behavior. . . Unable to sit, to go into that sorrow
where what didn't happen presses against what did,

she would get up, go out looking for "something
different," do anything to keep moving, behaving. . .
Going. But you Hans, you are a sitter, and I know

you will not be getting up until you have put this one
behind you. . . And so your friends pass by waiting,
wanting to know what you will come up with when you rise

from your stationary chair, our Hans reading and smoking.

LIAM RECTOR

Religion and the Life of the Intellect

In many intellectual circles the myth still circulates that religion is the preserve of the dim-witted and unlettered. Yet, recently *The New York Times Magazine* carried an article on the "return to religion" among intellectuals. From Harvard to Berkeley, and amid inquisitive people generally, there's an undeniable renewal of interest in the questions traditional religion raises and seeks to answer. This fascination is largely a result of the failures of secular substitutes for religion (such as rationalism, narcissism, technological utopianism, aestheticism, and extremist political ideologies) to give abidingly satisfying answers to the truly significant puzzles in life: goodness, suffering, love, death, and the meaning of it all.

By no means, however, does this religious renaissance entail embracing the ersatz gods of dog-eat-dog individualism, consumerism, or superpatriotism. Nor does it imply a retreat from working for peace, justice, or human dignity. Rather, there's an awareness that, as Jean Bethke Elshtain put it, religious commitment "can help further social reform," and that religion can supply the ethical bedrock upon which to make political choices which are far more durable than those based on passing ideologies and enthusiasms. Nor does the new openness to religion signify a hostility to science, but rather an appreciation of the limits of science and technology.

The New York Times Magazine article discussed the NEW OXFORD REVIEW as part of this return to religion, and rightly so. We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW are spearheading today's intellectual engagement with what Daniel Bell terms "the sacred." We are particularly interested in exploring religious commitments that yield humane social consequences, as exemplified by such giants as St. Francis, Gandhi, Bonhoeffer, Barth, Tawney, Schumacher, Mounier, Dorothy Day, Archbishop Tutu, Lech Walesa, Martin Luther King Jr., and Archbishop Romero. And we probe the literary and philosophical riches offered by such greats as Kierkegaard, Tolstoy, Buber, Auden, Eliot, Silone, Maritain, Waugh, Merton, C.S. Lewis, Simone Weil, Flannery O'Connor, and Graham Greene.

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ness, no bafflement before darkness, no surprise before the universe, no anxiety before the limits of the mind. There is only an analytic din. It includes traces of wisdom, such as Nozick's treatment of happiness, or his account of the emotions; but finally it is too smooth. Nozick is not smug about the world. He is smug about his thinking about the world. What being has drawn from him is articulateness.

Returned to the problem of living, the philosopher probes for the dimensions of reality that matter; and this is what he finds:

> It contains (hold your breath): value, meaning, importance, weight, depth, amplitude, intensity, height, vividness, richness, wholeness, beauty, truth, goodness, fulfillment, energy, autonomy, individuality, vitality, creativity, focus, purpose, development, serenity, holiness, perfection, expressiveness, authenticity, freedom, infinitude, enduringness, eternity, wisdom, understanding, life, nobility, play, grandeur, greatness, radiance, integrity, personality, loftiness, idealness, transcendence, growth, novelty, expansiveness, originality, purity, simplicity, preciousness, significance, vastness, profundity, integration, harmony, flourishing, power, and destiny.

And two hard-boiled eggs.

CORRESPONDENCE

continued from page 6

The procedure that has been so effective there is random urinalysis: a roll of the dice within a command, with the last digit of the service members' Social Security number determining who donates a specimen. Then the fun really begins. The lucky few line up, have their IDs checked, are given a bottle, and are led one at a time to the toilet, where a law-enforcement type watches the donor urinate.

When our congressmen trumpet the successes of urinalysis, I say: if it's such a great idea, let's see *you* submit a sample to a random test under direct supervision. Let's see *your* spouses suffer the same indignation. Direct observation is the way the game is played. If you're not willing to sacrifice your dignity, then get down off the soap box. More important, if you're not willing to submit yourselves to that kind of scrutiny, then ban that type of shame in all state and federal systems.

MICHAEL COLLINS
Monterey, California

TRB

continued from page 8

egalitarianism with an equally radical belief in free market capitalism. Indeed, he saw his theories as a bulwark *against* socialism, protectionism, and Bryan-style populist demagoguery. But he noted the difference between capitalism in theory and the actual economy he saw around him. He distinguished between the accumulation of wealth and the creation of wealth. And he recognized that wealth accumulated in non-productive ways was essentially taken from others' share: not merely unfair but actually bad for economic growth.

Although George's 100 percent land tax is impracticable, there are practical implications from his theories. George would sneer at the policy of giving away broadcast licenses for free. (Partly because of this policy, media is now the third-largest category of the Forbes 400.) He would understand the logic of an excess-profits tax on domestic oil and gas at the time of the OPEC energy hijack. He would see the futility of various current liberal schemes to "help" first-time home buyers through government subsidies, all of which will simply get capitalized into higher home prices. He would go ballistic over the idea of reopening the capital gains tax break for real estate.

Above all, perhaps, George would observe how the developed world has been suffering in recent years from real estate sickness. At times when the reward for happening to own a middle-class house has been greater than the reward for middle-class labor, this disease has twisted values, sucked away productivity, and redistributed wealth at random. And if, as many believe, the process is now going into reverse, the dislocations will be just as severe.

But *Progress and Poverty* is unavoidably a product of its time and place. That, more than its universal application, is what makes it a good read. Henry George was a self-educated American original, full of optimism and schemes for national improvement. Flush with Darwin and Herbert Spencer, he was a great one for proclaiming scientific "laws" of this, that, or the other aspect of the human condition—including, ultimately, the "law of human progress," with which I won't detain you. (Oh, well: it's "association in equality.")

Like Herbert Croly (see John B. Judis's essay on page 84), George felt that the closing off of the Western frontier meant that American life would have to change. The Jeffersonian ideal of equality through widespread small land ownership would become impossible. But while Croly thought this logic dictated a centralized economy, with a large government role, George thought his more radical expedient could allow us to have more freedom and more equality, too. It was a more American prescription, even if it didn't carry the day.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Ragtime

LIKE A PACK OF AUTOGRAPH hounds straining behind a velvet rope, the magazines of America bulge in their racks. I wonder about the trade. So many magazines published these days, most of them attempting to win the hearts of a particular constituency identified by a comically clean-cut Harvard MBA with nothing in his head but stacks of cash. So there are rags for cyclists, morticians, weightlifters, philatelists, taxidermists, sexual perverts, druggies, woodworkers, and on down the line. Even the more general interest magazines painstakingly identify "markets." Somehow I can't picture Henry Luce—he of the little notebook in which, fresh from Yale, he jotted his plan "news magazine, money magazine, sports magazine"—barking his first command: "Let's go!—but first, get me some market research."

WHAT GETS ME ABOUT MARKET identification is not whether it makes commercial sense (for all I know it does), but that it denies magazines the right to original self-generated intelligence. A magazine is built out of words, or should be. In a literary culture, words carry the day. But ours is no longer a literary culture. It is a journalistic culture, and in a journalistic culture words don't count more than any other medium of communication. If a journalist could get his message across with fish, the world would stink with information. Even THE NEW REPUBLIC, 75 and going very strong, has writers who seem to yearn for television as much as the written language. Twenty years ago those same writers would have condescended to television as a form of fun.

NOT SO LONG AGO THE WORLD of knowledge and feeling was intended for everyone—not forest rangers or actuaries or snowmobile drivers, but everyone alive. Words did that. They assumed and created a common frame of reference, one that insisted on and promoted the universality of central things. People weren't defined as the niches in which they found themselves. They weren't markets. Like other things made up of words, magazines addressed them as a species.

NOW MAGAZINES SEEM TO TAKE it for granted that because people can be compartmentalized, they don't care about language. *Sports Illustrated*, when it started out, was produced by real writers who happened to like sports, not sports junkies who used words as a mere conveyance. The original *Vanity Fair* was a writers' magazine. Today it still has fine writers, but they are obscured by the architecture of the whole, the cold, jagged mirrors of which the new *Vanity Fair* is composed.

EVERY MAGAZINE HAS ITS OWN architecture. *National Geographic* is a Greek revival temple. *TV Guide* a fruit stand. The *New Yorker* a men's hat store. The *Atlantic* is a church (Congregational). THE NEW REPUBLIC is a Capitol Hill waiting room with a signed picture of the Congressman shaking hands with Irving Howe. I am searching in vain for a library.

I BROWSE FROM RACK TO RACK and it is not like browsing in a bookstore. When I pick up one of these publications it seems to want to fly off. In a way, a magazine is closer to the noise of living than a book. A book, a good one, spirits you away from the world, cocoons you in its words. But a magazine, by its mere flimsiness, its insistent disposability, allows you to remain where the action is. For that reason the writing in a magazine feels different from that in a book. A magazine's words are sort of talked at you, as if someone passing through the house paused briefly to tell you a story. You listen but you don't stop ironing. It is easy, then, to conclude that words don't have to count in magazines. But they ought to count highly. Transients they are, but essential transients. If you pause in your day, after all, why not make the pause a stunner? Writing in a magazine should behave like the Ancient Mariner. It should grab you by the lapels and force you to gulp at its batty tale.

NEWSMAGAZINES ARE HAVING A hard time of it these days. Recapitulations of a week's stories won't suffice anymore. Television and newspapers offer recapitulations, as well as stories that unfold day after day. Even sophisticated news analyses do not add much. Television is getting better at that, newspapers much better. And besides, who says that the great masses of Americans really *want* sophisticated news analyses? With news from so many places and sources hurling at them like locusts, most people are probably content to be adequately informed, and they can get their adequate information from lots of places.

IF NEWSMAGAZINES REALLY WANT to distinguish themselves, one way is to go back to the future. Back to words and language. Not fancy dress stuff, but language enlisted in the effort to see into the soul of the news, the story of feeling, a sensibility, the story about why people respond to the story. A writer for a newsmagazine is in the catbird seat if only he or she would recognize the advantage. Every day the world of events offers up material beside which the wildest fiction is merely pale or freakish. What the writer has to do is try to see into the life of the event and re-create it.

AS FOR JOURNALS OF OPINION, I am sorry to say that I do not see many of these on the racks. *Commentary*, the *Nation*, the *Public Interest*, and this one, of course, the first magazine to employ me. Readers of TNR have wonderfully long and cranky memories. In my mid-30s in 1973, I wrote a piece for the magazine on John Reed, and an old subscriber responded, "Yes, that's what you say today, Mr. Smarty Pants. But in 1928 you specifically said . . ." I miss that sort of accusation, much as I miss the world in which words were meant for everyone, not for markets, and were created to be remembered. Fifteen years ago at TNR a good deal of splendid craziness was produced by people for whom words meant a life. John Osborne, with his fierce Southern growl telling some hapless Senator who complained about a column to go straight to hell. Henry Fairlie, on those occasions when he had not just fallen in love with the girl of his dreams, brooding darkly in his office and emerging with the most elegant, brilliant dissection of a false idea. Still at it, too.

WHAT I CHERISH ESPECIALLY about TNR in those years was something I saw only in a photograph: Walter Lippmann sitting at his desk in the sparsest office, turning away from the camera with supreme annoyance that anything should interrupt him as he wrote. The picture wanted to get in the way of the words. So far the picture has not gotten in the way of the words at TNR, though one should not, I think, congratulate TNR on its 75th anniversary too loudly, since congratulations tend to make the recipient stand still and TNR has much good work before it.

THE WORLD IS LOSING TOUCH with words. I watch them fly into the ether every day, like ghosts disappearing through an open window. I would hope that no such escapes are ever permitted at TNR, that the windows remain shut tight and the words bounce like charged ions in every office on the verge of explosion.

ROGER ROSENBLATT

Roger Rosenblatt was TNR's literary editor from 1975 to 1978.

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